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EXCURSIONS IN ART AND LETTERS

BY

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

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EXCURSIONS IN ART AND LETTERS.

MICHEL ANGELO.

THE overthrow of the pagan religion was the deathblow of pagan Art. The temples shook to their foundations, the statues of the gods shuddered, a shadow darkened across the pictured and sculptured world, when through the ancient realm was heard the wail, "Pan, great Pan is dead." The nymphs fled to their caves affrighted. Dryads, Oreads, and Naiads abandoned the groves, mountains, and streams that they for ages had haunted. Their voices were heard no more singing by shadowy brooks, their faces peered no longer through the sighing woods; and of all the mighty train of greater and lesser divinities and deified heroes to whom Greece and Rome had bent the knee and offered sacrifice, Orpheus alone lingered in the guise of the Good Shepherd.

Christianity struck the deathblow not only to pagan Art, but for a time to all Art. Sculpture and Painting were in its mind closely allied to idolatry. Under its influence the arts slowly wasted away as with a mortal disease. With ever-declining strength they struggled for centuries, gasping

as it were for breath, and finally, almost in utter atrophy, half alive, half dead, — a ruined, maimed, deformed presence, shorn of all their glory and driven out by the world, — they found a beggarly refuge and sufferance in some Christian church or monastery.

The noble and majestic statues of the sculptured gods of ancient Greece were overthrown and buried in the ground, their glowing and pictured figures were swept from the walls of temples and dwellings, and in their stead only a crouching, timid race of bloodless saints were seen, not glad to be men, and fearful of God. Humanity dared no longer to stand erect, but groveled in superstitious fear, and lashed its flesh in penance, and was ashamed and afraid of all its natural instincts. How then was it possible for Art to live? Beauty, happiness, life, and joy were but a snare and a temptation, and Religion and Art, which can never be divorced, crouched together in fear.

The long black period of the Middle Ages came to shroud everything in ignorance. Literature, art, poetry, science, sank into a nightmare of sleep. Only arms survived. The world became a battlefield, simply for power and dominion, until religion, issuing from the Church, bore in its van the banner of chivalry.

But the seasons of history are like the seasons of the year. Nothing utterly dies. And after the long apparently dead winter of the Middle Ages the spring came again — the spring of the Renais-

sance — when liberty and humanity awoke, and art, literature, science, poesy, all suddenly felt a new influence come over them. The Church itself shook off its apathy, inspired by a new spirit. Liberty, long downtrodden and tyrannized over, roused itself, and struck for popular rights. The great contest of the Guelphs and Ghibellines began. There was a ferment throughout all society. The great republics of Italy arose. Commerce began to flourish; and despite all the wars, contests, and feuds of people and nobles, and the decimations from plague and disease, art, literature, science, and religion itself, burst forth into a new and vigorous life. One after another there arose those great men whose names shine like planets in history — Dante, with his wonderful “*Divina Commedia*,” written, as it were, with a pen of fire against a stormy background of night; Boccaccio, with his sunny sheaf of idyllic tales; Petrarca, the earnest lover of liberty, the devoted patriot, the archæologist and philosopher as well as poet, whose tender and noble spirit is marked through his exquisitely finished canzone and sonnets, and his various philosophical works; Villari, the historian; and all the illustrious company that surrounded the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent — Macchiavelli, Poliziano, Boiardo, the three Pulci, Leon Battista Alberti, Aretino, Pico della Mirandola, and Marsilio Ficino; and, a little later, Ariosto and Tasso, whose stanzas are still sung by the gondoliers of Venice; and Guarini and Bibbi-

ena and Bembo, — and many another in the fields of poesy and literature. Music then also began to develop itself ; and Guido di Arezzo arranged the scale and the new method of notation. Art also sent forth a sudden and glorious coruscation of genius, beginning with Cimabue and Giotto, to shake off the stiff cerements of Byzantine tradition in which it had so long been swathed, and to stretch its limbs to freer action, and spread its wings to higher flights of power, invention, and beauty. The marble gods, which had lain dethroned and buried in the earth for so many centuries, rose with renewed life from their graves, and reasserted over the world of Art the dominion they had lost in the realm of Religion. It is useless to rehearse the familiar names that then illumined the golden age of Italian art, where shine preëminent those of Leonardo, the widest and most universal genius that perhaps the world has ever seen ; of Michel Angelo, the greatest power that ever expressed itself in stone or color ; of Raffaëlle, whose exquisite grace and facile design have never been surpasséd ; and of Titian, Giorgione, Veronese, and Tintoretto, with their Venetian splendors. Nor did science lag behind. Galileo ranged the heavens with his telescope, and, like a second Joshua, bade the sun stand still ; and Columbus, ploughing the unknown deep, added another continent to the known world.

This was the Renaissance or new birth in Italy ; after the long drear night of ignorance and dark-

ness, again the morning came and the glory returned. As Italy above all other lands is the land of the Renaissance, so Florence above all cities is the city of the Renaissance. Its streets are haunted by historic associations; at every corner, and in every byplace or piazza, you meet the spirits of the past. The ghosts of the great men who have given such a charm and perfume to history meet you at every turn. Here they walked and worked centuries ago; here to the imagination they still walk, and they scarcely seem gone. Here is the stone upon which Dante sat and meditated, — was it an hour ago or six centuries? Here Brunelleschi watched the growing of his mighty dome, and here Michel Angelo stood and gazed at it while dreaming of that other mighty dome of St. Peter's which he was afterwards to raise, and said, "Like it I will not, and better I cannot." As one walks through the piazza of Sta Maria Novella, and looks up at the façade that Michel Angelo called his "sposa," it is not difficult again to people it with the glad procession that bore Cimabue's famous picture, with shouts and pomp and rejoicing, to its altar within the church. In the Piazza della Signoria one may in imagination easily gather a crowd of famous men to listen to the piercing tones and powerful eloquence of Savonarola. Here gazing up, one may see towering against the sky, and falling as it were against the trooping clouds, the massive fortress-like structure of the Palazzo Publico, with its tall machico-

lated tower, whence the bell so often called the turbulent populace together; or dropping one's eyes, behold under the lofty arches of the Loggia of Orcagna the marble representations of the ancient and modern world assembled together, — peacefully: the antique Ajax, the Renaissance Perseus of Cellini, the Rape of the Sabines, by John of Bologna, and the late group of Polyxines, by Fedi, holding solemn and silent conclave. In the Piazza del Duomo at the side of Brunelleschi's noble dome, the exquisite campanile of Giotto, slender, graceful, and joyous, stands like a bride and whispers ever the name of its master and designer. And turning round, one may see the Baptistery celebrated by Dante, and those massive bronze doors storied by Ghiberti, which Michel Angelo said were worthy to be the doors of Paradise. History and romance meets us everywhere. The old families still give their names to the streets, and palaces, and *loggie*. Every now and then a marble slab upon some house records the birth or death within of some famous citizen, artist, writer, or patriot, or perpetuates the memory of some great event. There is scarcely a street or a square which has not something memorable to say and to recall, and one walks through the streets guided by memory, looking behind more than before, and seeing with the eyes of the imagination. Here is the Bargello, by turns the court of the Podestà and the prison of Florence, whence so many edicts were issued, and where the groans of so many

prisoners were echoed. Here is the Church of the Carmine, where Masaccio and Lippi painted those frescoes which are still living on its walls, though the hands that painted and the brains that dreamed them into life are gone forever. Here are the *loggie* which were granted only to the fifteen highest citizens, from which fair ladies, who are now but dust, looked and laughed so many a year ago. Here are the *piazze* within whose tapestried stockades gallant knights jousted in armor, and fair eyes, gazing from above, "rained influence and adjudged the prize." Here are the fortifications at which Michel Angelo worked as an engineer and as a combatant; and here among the many churches, each one of which bears on its walls or over its altars the painted or sculptured work of some of the great artists of the flowering prime of Florence, is that of the Santa Croce, the sacred and solemn mausoleum of many of its mighty dead. As we wander through its echoing nave at twilight, when the shadows of evening are deepening, we may hold communion with these great spirits of the past. The Peruzzi and Baldi Chapels are illustrated by the frescoes of Giotto. The foot treads upon many a slab under which lie the remains of soldier, and knight, and noble, and merchant prince, who, centuries ago, their labors and battles and commerce done, were here laid to rest. The nave on either side is lined with monumental statues of the illustrious dead. Ungrateful Florence, who drove her greatest poet from her gates to find

a grave in Ravenna, *patriis extorris ab urbe*, here tardily and in penitence raised to him a monument after vainly striving to reclaim his bones. Here, too, among others, are the statues and monuments of Michel Angelo, Macchiavelli, Galileo, Lanzi, Aretino, Guicciardini, Alfieri, Leon Battista Alberti, and Raffaello Morghen.

Of all the great men who shed a lustre over Florence, no one so domineers over it and pervades it with his memory and his presence as Michel Angelo. The impression he left upon his own age and upon all subsequent ages is deeper, perhaps, than that left by any other save Dante. Everything in Florence recalls him. The dome of Brunelleschi, impressive and beautiful as it is, and prior in time to that of St. Peter's, cannot rid itself of its mighty brother in Rome. With Ghiberti's doors are ever associated his words. In Santa Croce we all pause longer before the tomb where his body is laid than before any other — even that of Dante. The empty place before the Palazzo Vecchio, where his David stood, still holds its ghost. All places which knew him in life are still haunted by his memory. The house where he lived, thought, and worked is known to every pilgrim of art. The least fragment which his hand touched is there preserved as precious, simply because it was his; and it is with a feeling of reverence that we enter the little closet where his mighty works were designed. There still stands his folding desk, lit by a little slip of a window;

and there are the shelves and pigeon-holes where he kept his peneils, colors, tools, and books. The room is so narrow that one can scarcely turn about in it; and the contrast between this narrow, restricted space and the vastness of the thoughts which there were born, and the extent of his fame which fills the world, is strangely impressive and affecting. Here, barring the door behind him to exclude the world, he sat and studied and wrote and drew, little dreaming that hundreds of thousands of pilgrims would in after-centuries come to visit it in reverence from a continent then but just discovered, and peopled only with savages.

But more than all other places, the Church of San Lorenzo is identified with him; and the Medicean Chapel, which he designed, is more a monument to him than to those in honor of whom it was built.

Here, therefore, under the shadow of these noble shapes, and in the silent influence of this solemn place, let us cast a hurried glance over the career and character of Michel Angelo as exhibited in his life and his greatest works. To do more than this would be impossible within the brief limits we can here command. We may then give a glance into the adjoining and magnificent Hall, which is the real mausoleum of the Medici, and is singularly in contrast with it.

Michel Angelo was born at Caprese, in the Casentino, near Florence, on March 6, 1474 or 1475, according as we reckon from the nativity or

the incarnation of Christ. He died at Rome on Friday, February 23, 1564, at the ripe age of eighty-nine or ninety. He claimed to be of the noble family of the Counts of Canossa. He certainly was of the family of the Berlinghi. His father was one of the twelve Buonomini, and was Podestà of Caprese when Michel Angelo was born. From his early youth he showed a strong inclination to art, and vainly his father sought to turn him aside from this vocation. His early studies were under Ghirlandajo. But he soon left his master to devote himself to sculpture ; and he was wont to say that he “ had imbibed this disposition with his nurse’s milk ” — she being the wife of a stone-carver. Lorenzo the Magnificent favored him and received him into his household ; and there under his patronage he prosecuted his studies, associating familiarly with some of the most remarkable men of the period, enriching his mind with their conversation, and giving himself earnestly to the study not only of art, but of science and literature. The celebrated Angelo Poliziano, then tutor to the sons of Lorenzo, was strongly attracted to him, and seems to have adopted him also as a pupil. His early efforts as a sculptor were not remarkable ; and though many stories are told of his great promise and efficiency, but little weight is to be given to them. He soon, however, began to distinguish himself among his contemporaries ; and his Cupid and Bacchus, though wanting in all the spirit and characteristics of antique work, were, for

the time and age of the sculptor, important and remarkable. After this followed the *Pietà*, now in St. Peter's at Rome, in which a different spirit began to exhibit itself; but it was not till later on that the great individuality and originality of his mind was shown, when from an inform block of rejected marble he hewed the colossal figure of David. He had at last found the great path of his genius. From this time forward he went on with ever-increasing power — working in many various arts, and stamping on each the powerful character of his mind. His grandest and most characteristic works in sculpture and painting were executed in his middle age. The Sistine Chapel he completed when he was thirty-eight years old, the stern figure of the Moses when he was forty, the great sculptures of the Medici Chapel when he was from fifty to fifty-five; and in his sixty-sixth year he finished the Last Judgment. Thenceforth his thoughts were chiefly given to architecture, with excursions into poetry — though during this latter period he painted the frescoes in the Pauline Chapel; and after being by turns sculptor, painter, architect, engineer, and poet, he spent the last years of his life in designing and superintending the erection of St. Peter's at Rome.

One of his last works, if not the last, was the model of the famous cupola of St. Peter's, which he never saw completed. In some respects this was departed from in its execution by his successors; but in every change it lost, and had it been

carried out strictly as he designed it, it would have been even nobler and more beautiful than it is.

Here was a long life of ceaseless study, of untiring industry, of never-flagging devotion to art. Though surrounded by discouragements of every kind, harassed by his family, forced to obey the arbitrary will of a succession of Popes, and, in accordance with their orders, to abandon the execution of his high artistic conceptions and waste months and years on mere mechanic labor in superintending mines and quarries — driven against his will, now to be a painter when he desired to be a sculptor, now to be an architect when he had learned to be a painter, now as an engineer to be employed on fortifications when he was longing for his art; through all the exigencies of his life, and all the worrying claims of patrons, family, and country, he kept steadily on, never losing courage even to the end — a man of noble life, high faith, pure instincts, great intellect, powerful will, and inexhaustible energy; proud and scornful, but never vain; violent of character, but generous and true, — never guilty through all his long life of a single mean or unworthy act: a silent, serious, unsocial, self-involved man, oppressed with the weight of great thoughts, and burdened by many cares and sorrows. With but a grim humor, and none of the lighter graces of life, he went his solitary way, ploughing a deeper furrow in his age than any of his contemporaries, remarkable as they were, — an earnest and unwearied student and seeker, even to the last.

It was in his old age that he made a drawing of himself in a child's go-cart with the motto "*An-cora imparo*" — I am still learning. And one winter day toward the end of his life, the Cardinal Gonsalvi met him walking down towards the Colosseum during a snowstorm. Stopping his carriage, the Cardinal asked where he was going in such stormy weather. "To school," he answered "to try to learn something."

Slowly, as years advanced, his health declined, but his mind retained to the last all its energy and clearness; and many a craggy sonnet and madrigal he wrote towards the end of his life, full of high thought and feeling — struggling for expression, and almost rebelliously submitting to the limits of poetic form; and at last, peacefully, after eighty-nine long years of earnest labor and never-failing faith, he passed away, and the great light went out. No! it did not go out; it still burns as brightly as ever across these long centuries to illumine the world.

Fitly to estimate the power of Michel Angelo as a sculptor, we must study the great works in the Medicean Chapel in the Church of San Lorenzo, which show the culmination of his genius in this branch of art.

The original church of San Lorenzo was founded in 930, and is one of the most ancient in Italy. It was burned down in 1423, and reërected in 1425 by the Medici from Brunelleschi's designs. Later, in 1523, by the order of Leo X., Michel

Angelo designed and began to execute the new sacristy, which was intended to serve as a mausoleum to Giuliano dei Medici, Duke of Nemours, brother of Leo X., and younger son of Lorenzo the Magnificent; and to Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, and grandson of the great Lorenzo. Within this mausoleum, which is now called the Medici Chapel, were placed the statues of Giuliano and Lorenzo. They are both seated on lofty pedestals, and face each other on opposite sides of the chapel. At the base of one, reclining on a huge sarcophagus, are the colossal figures of Day and Night, and at the base of the other the figures of Aurora and Crepuscule. This chapel is quite separated from the church itself. You enter from below by a dark and solemn crypt, beneath which are the bodies of thirty-four of the family, with large slabs at intervals on the pavement, on which their names are recorded. You ascend a staircase, and go through a corridor into this chapel. It is solemn, cold, bare, white, and lighted from above by a lantern open to the sky. There is no color, the lower part being carved of white marble, and the upper part and railings wrought in stucco. A chill comes over you as you enter it; and the whole place is awed into silence by these majestic and solemn figures. You at once feel yourself to be in the presence of an influence, serious, grand, impressive, and powerful, and of a character totally different from anything that sculpture has hitherto produced, either in the an-

cient or modern world. Whatever may be the defects of these great works, and they are many and evident, one feels that here a lofty intellect and power has struggled, and fought its way, so to speak, into the marble, and brought forth from the insensate stone a giant brood of almost supernatural shapes. It is not nature that he has striven to render, but rather to embody thoughts, and to clothe in form conceptions which surpass the limits of ordinary nature. It is idle to apply here the rigid rules of realism. The attitudes are distorted, and almost impossible. No figure could ever retain the position of the Night at best for more than a moment, and to sleep in such an attitude would be scarcely possible. And yet a mighty burden of sleep weighs down this figure, and the solemnity of night itself broods over it. So also the Day is more like a primeval titanic form than the representation of a human being. The action of the head, for instance, is beyond nature. The head itself is merely blocked out, and scarcely indicated in its features. But this very fact is in itself a stroke of genius ; for the suggestion of mystery in this vague and unfinished face is far more impressive than any elaborated head could have been. It is supposed he left it thus, because he found the action too strained. So be it ; but here is Day still involved in clouds, but now arousing from its slumbers, throwing off the mists of darkness, and rising with a tremendous energy of awakening life. The same character

also pervades the Aurora and Crepuscule. They are not man and woman, they are types of ideas. One lifts its head, for the morning is coming ; one holds its head abased, for the gloom of evening is drawing on. There is no joy in any of these figures. A terrible sadness and seriousness oppresses them. Aurora does not smile at the coming of the light, is not glad, has little hope, but looks upon it with a terrible weariness, almost with despair — for it sees little promise, and doubts far more than it hopes. Twilight, again, almost disdainfully sinks to repose. The day has accomplished almost nothing : oppressed and hopeless, it sees the darkness close about it.

What Michel Angelo meant to embody in these statues can only be guessed — but certainly no trivial thought. Their names convey nothing. It was not beauty, or grace, or simple truth to nature, that he sought to express. In making them, the weight of this unexplained mystery of life hung over him ; the struggle of humanity against superior forces oppressed him. The doubts, the despair, the power, the indomitable will of his own nature are in them. They are not the expressions of the natural day of the world, of the glory of the sunrise, the tenderness of the twilight, the broad gladness of day, or the calm repose of night ; but they are seasons and epochs of the spirit of man — its doubts and fears, its sorrows and longings and unrealized hopes. The sad condition of his country oppressed him. Its shame overwhelmed

him. His heart was with Savonarola, to whose excited preaching he had listened, and his mind was inflamed by the hope of a spiritual regeneration of Italy and the world. The gloom of Dante enshrouded him, and the terrible shapes of the "Inferno" had made deeper impression on his nature than all the sublimed glories of the "Paradiso." His colossal spirit stood fronting the agitated storms of passions which then shook his country, like a rugged cliff that braves the tempest-whipped sea — disdainfully casting from its violent and raging waves, and longing almost with a vain hope for the time when peace, honor, liberty, and religion should rule the world.

This at least would seem to be implied in the lines he wrote under his statue of Night, in response to the quatrain written there by Giovan' Battista Strozzi. These are the lines of Strozzi : —

"La notte che tu vedi in sì dolci atti
Dormire, fu da un angelo scolpita
In questo sasso ; e, perchè dorme, ha vita
Destala, se no 'l credi, e parleratti."

Which may be thus rendered in English : —

"Night, which in peaceful attitude you see
Here sleeping, from this stone an angel wrought.
Sleeping, it lives. If you believe it not,
Awaken it, and it will speak to thee."

And this was Michel Angelo's response : —

"Grato mi è il sonno, e più l'esser de sasso
Mentre che il danno e la vergogna dura
Non veder non sentir m'è gran ventura
Però, non mi destar ; deh ! parla basso."

Which may be rendered : —

“ Grateful is sleep — and more, of stone to be ;
So long as crime and shame here hold their state,
Who cannot see nor feel is fortunate —
Therefore speak low, and do not waken me.”

This would clearly seem to show that under these giant shapes he meant to embody allegorically at once the sad condition of humanity and the oppressed condition of his country. What lends itself still more to this interpretation is the character and expression of both the statues of Lorenzo and Giuliano, and particularly that of Lorenzo, who leans forward with his hand raised to his chin in so profound and sad a meditation that the world has given it the name of *Il Pensiero* — not even calling it *Il Penseroso*, the thinker, but *Il Pensiero*, thought itself ; while the attitude and expression of Giuliano is of one who helplessly holds the sceptre and lets the world go, heedless of all its crime and folly, and too weak to lend his hand to set it right.

But whatever the interpretation to be given to these statues, in power, originality, and grandeur of character they have never been surpassed. It is easy to carp at their defects. Let them all be granted. They are contorted, uneasy, over-anatomical, untrue to nature. Viewed with the keen and searching eye of the critic, they are full of faults, *e pur si muove*. There is a lift of power, an energy of conception, a grandeur and boldness of treatment which redeems all defects. They are

the work of a great mind, spurning the literal, daring almost the impossible, and using human form as a means of thought and expression. It may almost be said that in a certain sense they are great, not in despite of their faults, but by very virtue of these faults. In them is a spirit which was unknown to the Greeks and Romans. They sought the simple, the dignified, the natural; beauty was their aim and object. Their ideal was a quiet, passionless repose, with little action, little insistence of parts. Their treatment was large and noble, their attitude calm. No torments reach them, or if passion enter, it is subdued to beauty : —

“Calm pleasures there abide, majestic pains.”

Their gods looked down upon earth through the noblest forms of Phidias with serenity, heedless of the violent struggles of humanity — like grand and peaceful presences. Even in the *Laocoön*, which stepped to the utmost permitted bounds of the antique sculpture, there is the restraint of beauty, and suffering is modified to grace. But here in these Titans of Michel Angelo there is a new spirit — better or worse, it is new. It represents humanity caught in the terrible net of Fate, storming the heavens, Prometheus-like, breaking forth from the bonds of convention, and terrible as grand. But noble as these works are, they afford no proper school for imitation, and his followers have, as has been fitly said, only caught the

contortions without the inspiration of the sibyl. They lift the spirit, enlarge the mind, and energize the will of those who feel them and are willing only to feel them; but they are bad models for imitation. It is only such great and original minds as Michel Angelo who can force the grand and powerful out of the wrong and unnatural; and he himself only at rare intervals prevailed in doing this violence to nature.

Every man has a right to be judged by his best. It is not the number of his failures but the value of his successes which afford the just gauge of every man's genius. Here in these great statues Michel Angelo succeeded, and they are the highest tide-mark of his power as a sculptor. The Moses, despite its elements of strength and power, is of a lower grade. The Pietà is the work of a young man who has not as yet grown to his full strength, and who is shackled by his age and his contemporaries. The David has high qualities of nobility, but it is constrained to the necessities of the marble in which it is wrought. The Christ in the Church of the Minerva is scarcely worthy of him. But in these impersonations of Day, Night, Twilight, and Dawn, his genius had full scope, and rose to its greatest height.

These statues were executed by Michel Angelo, with various and annoying interruptions, when he was more than fifty-five years of age, and while he was in ill-health and very much overworked. Indeed, such was his condition of health at this time

that it gave great anxiety to his friends, and Giovanni Battista Mini, writing to his friend Bartolommeo Valori on the 29th of September, 1531, says: "Michel Angelo has fallen off in flesh, and the other day with Buggiardini and Antonio Mini we had a private talk about him, and we came to the conclusion that he will not live long unless things are remedied. He works very hard, eats little and that little is bad, sleeps not at all, and for a month past his sight has been weak, and he has pains in the head and vertigo, and, in fine, his head is affected and so is his heart, but there is a cure for each, for he is healthy." He was so besieged on all sides with commissions, and particularly by the Duke of Urbino, that the Pope at last issued a brief, ordering him, under pain of excommunication, to do no work except on these monuments, — and thus he was enabled to command his time and to carry on these great works to the condition in which they now are, though he never was able completely to finish them.

Of the same race with them are the wonderful frescoes of the sibyls and prophets and Biblical figures and Titans that live on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. And these are as amazing as, perhaps even more amazing in their way than, the sculpture of the Medicean Chapel. He was but thirty-four years of age when, at the instigation of Bramante, he was summoned to Rome by Pope Julius II. to decorate the ceiling. It is unpleasant to think that Bramante, in urging this step

upon the Pope, was animated with little good-will to Michel Angelo. From all accounts it would seem he was jealous of his growing fame, and deemed that in undertaking this colossal work failure would be inevitable. Michel Angelo had indeed worked in his youth under Ghirlandajo, but had soon abandoned his studio and devoted himself to sculpture; and though he had painted some few labored pictures and produced the famous designs for the great hall of the municipality at Florence, in competition with his famous rival Leonardo da Vinci, yet these cartoons had never been executed by him, and his fame was chiefly, if not solely, as a sculptor. Michel Angelo himself, though strongly urged to this undertaking by the Pope, was extremely averse to it, and at first refused, declaring that "painting was not his profession." The Pope, however, was persistent, and Michel was forced at last to yield, and to accept the commission. He then immediately began to prepare his cartoons, and, ignorant and doubtful of his own powers, summoned to his assistance several artists in Florence, to learn more properly from them the method of painting in fresco. Not satisfied with their work on the ceiling, he suddenly closed the doors upon them, sent them away, and, shutting himself up alone in the chapel, erased what they had done and began alone with his own hand. It was only about six weeks after his arrival in Rome that he thus began, and in this short space of time he had completed his designs, framed and erected the scaffolds,

laid on the rough casting preparatory to the finishing layer, and commenced his frescoes. This alone is an immense labor, and shows a wonderful mastery of all his powers. The design is entirely original, not only in the composition and character of the figures themselves, but in the architectural divisions and combinations in which they are placed. There are no less than 343 figures, of great variety of movements, grandiose proportions, and many of them of colossal size ; and to the sketches he first designed he seems to have absolutely adhered. Of course, within such a time he could not have made the large cartoons in which the figures were developed in their full proportions, but he seems only to have enlarged them from his figures as first sketched. With indomitable energy, and a persistence of labor which has scarcely a parallel, alone and without encouragement he prosecuted his task, despite the irritations and annoyances which he was forced to endure, the constant delays of payment, the fretful complaints of the impatient Pope, the accidents and disappointments incident to an art in which he had previously had no practice, and the many and worrying troubles from home by which he was constantly pursued. At last the Pope's impatience became imperious ; and when the vault was only one half completed, he forced Michel Angelo, under threats of his severe displeasure, to throw down the scaffolding and exhibit it to the world. The chapel was accordingly opened on All Saints' Day in November, 1508.

The public flocked to see it, and a universal cry of admiration was raised. In the crowd which then assembled was Raffaele, and the impression he received is plain from the fact that his style was at once so strongly modified by it. Bramante, too, was there, expecting to see the failure which he had anticipated, and to rejoice in the downfall of his great rival. But he was destined to be disappointed, and, as is recounted, but as one is unwilling to believe, he used his utmost efforts to induce the Pope to discharge Michel Angelo and commission Raffaele to complete the ceiling. It is even added that Raffaele himself joined in this intrigue, but there is no proof of this, and let us disbelieve it. Certain it is that in the presence of the Pope, when Michel Angelo broke forth in fierce language against Bramante for this injurious proposal, and denounced him for his ignorance and incapacity, he did not involve Raffaele in the same denunciation. Still there seems to be little doubt that the party and friends of Raffaele exerted their utmost influence to induce the Pope to substitute him for Michel Angelo. They did not, however, succeed. The Pope was steadfast, and again the doors were closed, and he was ordered to complete the work.

When again he began to paint there is no record. Winter is unfavorable to fresco-painting, and when a frost sets in, it cannot be carried on. In the autumn of 1510 we know that he applied to the Pope for permission to visit his friends in

Florence, and for an advance of money ; that the Pope replied by demanding when his work would be completed, and that the artist replied, " As soon as I shall be able ;" on which the Pope, repeating his words, struck him with his cane. Michel Angelo was not a man to brook this, and he instantly abandoned his work and went to Florence. The Pope, however, sent his page Accursio after him with pacific words, praying him to return, and with a purse of fifty crowns to pay his expenses ; and after some delay he did return.

Vasari and Condivi both assert that the vault of the Sistine Chapel was painted by Michel Angelo " alone and unaided, even by any one to grind his colors, in twenty months." But this cannot be true. He certainly had assistance not only for all the laying of the plaster and the merely mechanical work, but also in the painting of the architecture, and even of portions of the figures ; and it now seems to be pretty clear that the chapel was not completed until 1512. But this in itself, considering all the breaks and intervals when the work was necessarily interrupted, is stupendous.

The extraordinary rapidity with which he worked is clearly proved by the close examination which the erection of scaffolding has recently enabled Mr. Charles Heath Wilson and others to make. Fresco-painting can only be done while the plaster is fresh (hence its name) ; and as the plaster laid on one day will not serve for the next, it must be removed unless the painting on it is completed.

The junction of the new plaster leaves a slight line of division when closely examined, and thus it is easy to detect how much has been accomplished each day. It scarcely seems credible, though there can be no doubt of the fact, that many of the nude figures above life-size were painted in two days. The noble reclining figure of Adam occupied him only three days; and the colossal figures of the sibyls and prophets, which, if standing, would be eighteen feet in height, occupied him only from three to four days each. When one considers the size of these figures, the difficulty of painting anything overhead where the artist is constrained to work in a reclining position and often lying flat on his back, and the beauty, tenderness, and careful finish which has been given to all parts, and especially to the heads, this rapidity of execution seems almost marvelous.

Seen from below, these figures are solemn and striking; but seen near by, their grandeur of character is vastly more impressive, and their beauty and refinement, which are less apparent when seen from a distance, are quite as remarkable as their power and energy. Great as Michel Angelo was as a sculptor, he seems even greater as a painter. Not only is the design broader and larger, but there is a freedom of attitude, a strength and loftiness of conception, and a beauty of treatment, which are beyond what he reached, or perhaps strove for, in his statues. The figure of Adam, for instance, is not more wonderful for its novelty

and power of design than for its truth to nature. The figure of the Deity, encompassed by angelic forms, is whirling down upon him like a tempest. His mighty arm is outstretched, and from his extended fingers an electric flash of life seems to strike into the uplifted hand of Adam, whose reclining figure, issuing from the constraint of death, and quivering with this new thrill of animated being, stirs into action, and rises half to meet his Creator. Nothing could be more grand than this conception, more certain than its expression, or more simple than its treatment. Nothing, too, has ever been accomplished in art more powerful, varied, and original than the colossal figures of the sibyls and the prophets. The Ezekiel, listening to the voice of inspiration; the Jeremiah, surcharged with meditative thought, and weighed down with it as a lowering cloud with rain; the youthful Daniel, writing on his book, which an angel supports; Esaias, in the fullness of his manhood, leaning his elbow on his book and holding his hand suspended while turning he listens to the angel whose tidings he is to record; and the aged Zacharias, with his long beard, swathed in heavy draperies, and intently reading,—these are the prophets; and alternating with them on the span of the arch are the sibyls,—the noble Erythrean, seated almost in profile, with crossed legs, and turning the leaves of her book with one hand while the other drops at her side, grand in the still serenity of her beauty; the aged Persian

sibyl, turning sideway to peruse the book which she holds close to her eyes, while above her recline two beautiful naked youths, and below her sleeps a madonna with the child Christ; the Libyan, holding high behind her with extended arms her open scroll, and looking down over her shoulder; the Cumæan, old, weird, Dantesque in her profile, with a napkin folded on her head, reading in self-absorption, while two angels gaze at her; and last, the Delphic, sweet, calm, and beautiful in the perfectness of womanhood, who looks serenely down over her shoulder to charm us with a peaceful prophecy. All the faces and heads of these figures are evidently drawn from noble and characteristic models, — if, indeed, any models at all are used; and some of them, especially those of the Delphic and Erythrean, are full of beauty as well as power. All are painted with great care and feeling, and a lofty inspiration has guided a loving hand. There is nothing vague, feeble, or flimsy in them. They are ideal in the true sense — the strong embodiment of great ideas.

Even to enumerate the other figures would require more time and space than can now be given. But we cannot pass over in silence the wonderful series illustrative of Biblical history which form the centre of the ceiling, beginning with Chaos struggling into form, and ending with Lot and his children. Here in succession are the division of light from darkness — the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters (an extraordinary con-

ception, which Raffaello strove in vain to reproduce in another form in the Loggie of the Vatican); the wonderful creation of Adam; the temptation of the serpent, and the expulsion from Paradise, so beautiful in composition and feeling; the sacrifice to God; and finally the Flood.

Besides these are the grand nude figures of the decoration, which have never been equaled; and many Biblical stories, which, in the richness and multitude of greater things, are lost, but which in themselves would suffice to make any artist famous: as, for instance, the group called Rehoboam, a female figure bending forward and resting her hand upon her face, with the child leaning against her knee — a lovely sculptural group, admirably composed, and full of pathos; and the stern, despairing figure entitled Jesse, looking straight out into the distance before him — like Fate.

Here is no attempt at scenic effect, no effort for the picturesque, no literal desire for realism, no pictorial graces. A sombre, noble tone of color pervades them, — harmonizing with their grand design, but seeking nothing for itself, and sternly subjected and restrained to these powerful conceptions. Nature silently withdraws and looks on, awed by these mighty presences.

Only a tremendous energy and will could have enabled Michel Angelo to conceive and execute these works. The spirit in which he worked is heroic: oppressed as he was by trouble and want,

he never lost courage or faith. Here is a fragment of a letter he wrote to his brother while employed on this work, which will show the temper and character of the man. It is truly in the spirit of the Stoics of old : —

“ Make no friendship nor intimacies with any one but the Almighty alone. Speak neither good nor evil of any one, because the end of these things cannot yet be known. Attend only to your own affairs. I must tell you I have no money.” (He says this in answer to constant applications from his unworthy brother for pecuniary assistance.) “ I am, I may say, shoeless and naked. I cannot receive the balance of my pay till I have finished this work, and I suffer much from discomfort and fatigue. Therefore, when you also have trouble to endure, do not make useless complaints, but try to help yourself.”

The names of Raffaele and Michel Angelo are so associated, that that of one always rises in the mind when the other is mentioned. Their geniuses are as absolutely opposite as are their characters. Each is the antithesis of the other. In the ancient days we have the same kind of difference between Homer and Virgil, Demosthenes and Cicero, Æschylus and Euripides ; in later days, Molière and Racine, Rousseau and Voltaire, Shakespeare and Sir Philip Sidney, Beethoven and Mozart, Dante and Ariosto, Victor Hugo and Lamartine ; or to take our own age, Delacroix and Ary Scheffer, Browning and Tennyson. To the one belongs the sphere of power, to the other that

of charm. One fights his way to immortality, the other woos it.

Raffaello was of the latter class — sweet of nature, gentle of disposition, gifted with a rare sense of grace, a facile talent of design, and a refinement of feeling which, if it sometimes degenerated into weakness, never utterly lost its enchantment. He was exceedingly impressionable, reflected by turns the spirit of his masters, — was first Perugino, and afterwards modified his style to that of Fra Bartolommeo, and again, under the influence of Michel Angelo, strove to tread in his footsteps. He was not of a deep nature nor of a powerful character. There was nothing torrential in his genius, bursting its way through obstacles and sweeping all before it. It was rather that of the calm river, flowing at its own sweet will, and reflecting peacefully the passing figures of life. He painted as the bird sings. He was an artist because nature made him one — not because he had vowed himself to art, and was willing to struggle and fight for its smile. He was gentle and friendly — a pleasant companion — a superficial lover — handsome of person and pleasing of address — who always went surrounded by a corona of followers, who disliked work and left the execution of his designs in great measure to his pupils, while he toyed with the Fornarina. I do not mean to undervalue him in what he did. His works are charming — his invention was lively. He had the happy art of telling his story in outline, better,

perhaps, than any one else of his age. His highest reach was the *Madonna di S. Sisto*, and this certainly is full of that large sweetness and spiritual sensibility which entitles him to the common epithet of "*Divino*." But when he died at the early age of thirty-seven, he had come to his full development, and there is no reason to suppose that he would ever have attained a greater height. Indeed, during his latter years he was tired of his art, neglected his work, became more and more academic, and preferred to bask in the sunshine of his fame on its broad levels, to girding up his loins to struggle up precipitous ascents to loftier peaks. The world already began to blame him for this neglect, and to say that he had forgotten how to paint himself, and gave his designs only to his students to execute. Moved by these rumors, he determined alone to execute a work in fresco, and this work was the famous *Galatea* of the *Palazzo Farnese*. He was far advanced in it, when, during his absence one morning, a dark, short, stern-looking man called to see him. In the absence of *Raffaello*, this man gazed attentively at the *Galatea* for a long time, and then taking a piece of charcoal, he ascended a ladder which stood in the corner of the vast room, and drew off-hand on the wall a colossal male head. Then he came down and went away, saying to the attendant, "If *Signore Raffaello* wishes to know who came to see him, show him my card there on the wall." When *Raffaello* returned, the assistant

told him of his visitor, and showed him the head. "That is Michel Angelo," he said, "or the devil."

And Michel Angelo it was. Raffaello well knew what that powerful and colossal head meant, and he felt the terrible truth of its silent criticism on his own work. It meant, Your fresco is too small for the room — your style is too pleasing and trivial. Make something grand and colossal. Brace your mind to higher purpose, train your hand to nobler design. I say that Raffaello felt this stern criticism, because he worked no more there, and only carried out this one design. Raffaello's disposition was sweet and attractive, and he was beloved by all his friends. Vasari says of him, that he was as much distinguished by his *amorevolezza ed umanità*, his affectionate and sympathetic nature, as by his excellence as an artist; and another contemporary speaks of him as of *summæ bonitatis*, perfect sweetness of character. All this one sees in his face, which, turning, gazes dreamily at us over his shoulder, with dark, soft eyes, long hair, and smooth, unsuffering cheeks where Time has ploughed no furrows — easy, charming, graceful, refined, and somewhat feminine of character.

Michel Angelo was made of sterner stuff than this. His temper was violent, his bearing haughty, his character impetuous. He had none of the personal graces of his great rival. His face was, as it were, hammered sternly out by fate; his brow corrugated by care, his cheeks worn by thought, his hair and beard stiffly curled and bull-

like ; his expression sad and intense, with a weary longing in his deep-set eyes. Doubtless, at times, they flamed with indignation and passion — for he was very irascible, and suffered no liberties to be taken with him. He could not “sport with Amaryllis in the shade, or with the tangles of Neæra’s hair.” Art was his mistress, and a stern mistress she was, urging him ever onward to greater heights. He loved her with a passion of the intellect ; there was nothing he would not sacrifice for her. He was willing to be poor, almost to starve, to labor with incessant zeal, grudging even the time that sleep demanded, only to win her favor. He could not have been a pleasant companion, and he was never a lover of woman. His friendship with Vittoria Colonna was worlds away from the senses, — worlds away from such a connection as that of Raffaele with the Fornarina. They walked together in the higher fields of thought and feeling, in the region of ideas and aspirations. Their conversation was of art, and poesy, and religion, and the mysteries of life. They read to each other their poems, and discoursed on high themes of religion, and fate, and foreknowledge. The sonnets he addressed to her were in no trivial vein of human passion or sentiment.

“ Rapt above earth ” (he writes) “ by power of one fair face,
 Hers, in whose sway alone my heart delights,
 I mingle with the Blest on those pure heights
 Where man, yet mortal, rarely finds a place —
 With Him who made the Work that Work accords
 So well that, by its help and through His grace,

I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and words,
Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace."

In his *soul's* embrace, not in his arms. When he stood beside her dead body, he silently gazed at her, not daring to imprint a kiss on that serene brow even when life had departed. If he admired Petrarca, it was as a philosopher and a patriot, — for his canzone to Liberty, not for his sonnets to Laura. Dante, whom he called *Stella di alto valor*, the star of high power, was his favorite poet; Savonarola his single friend. The "Divina Commedia," or rather the "Inferno" alone, he thought worthy of illustration by his pencil; the doctrines of the latter he warmly espoused. "True beauty," says that great reformer, "comes only from the soul, from nobleness of spirit and purity of conduct." And so, in one of his madrigals, says Michel Angelo. "They are but gross spirits who seek in sensual nature the beauty that uplifts and moves every healthy intelligence even to heaven."

For the most part he walked alone and avoided society, wrapped up in his own thoughts; and once, when meeting Raffaello, he reproached him for being surrounded by a *cortège* of flatterers; to which Raffaello bitterly retorted, "And you go alone, like the headsman" — *andate solo come un boia*.

He was essentially original, and, unlike his great rival, followed in no one's footsteps. "Chi va dietro agli altri non li passa mai dinanzi," he said, — who follows behind others can never pass before them.

Yet, with all his ruggedness and imperiousness of character, he had a deep tenderness of nature, and was ready to meet any sacrifice for those whom he loved. Personal privations he cared little for, and sent to his family all his earnings, save what was absolutely necessary to support life. He had no greed for wealth, no love of display, no desire for luxuries : a better son never lived, and his unworthy brother he forgave over and over again, never weary of endeavoring to set him on his right path.

But at times he broke forth with a tremendous energy when pushed too far, as witness this letter to his brother. After saying, "If thou triest to do well, and to honor and revere thy father, I will aid thee like the others, and will provide for thee in good time a place of business," he thus breaks out in his postscript :—

"I have not wandered about all Italy, and borne every mortification, suffered hardship, lacerated my body with hard labor, and placed my life in a thousand dangers, except to aid my family ; and now that I have begun to raise it somewhat, thou alone art the one to embroil and ruin in an hour that which I have labored so long to accomplish. By the body of Christ, but it shall be found true that I shall confound ten thousand such as thou art if it be needful,—so be wise, and tempt not one who has already too much to bear."

He was generous and large in his charities. He supported out of his purse many poor persons, married and endowed secretly a number of young

girls, and gave freely to all who surrounded him. "When I die," asked he of his old and faithful servant Urbino, "what will become of you?" "I shall seek for another master in order to live," was the answer. "Ah, poor man!" cried Michel Angelo, and gave him at once 10,000 golden crowns. When this poor servant fell ill, he tended him with the utmost care, as if he were a brother, and on his death broke out into loud lamentations, and would not be comforted.

His fiery and impetuous temper, however, led him often into violence. He was no respecter of persons, and he well knew how to stand up for the rights of man. There was nothing of the courtier in him; and he faced the Pope with an audacious firmness of purpose and expression unparalleled at that time; and yet he was singularly patient and enduring, and gave way to the variable Pontiff's whims and caprices whenever they did not touch his dignity as a man. Long periods of time he allowed himself to be employed in superintending the quarrying of marble at Carrara, though his brain was teeming with great conceptions. He was oppressed, agitated, irritated on every side by home troubles, by papal caprices, and by the intestine tumult of his country, and much of his life was wasted in merely mechanical work which any inferior man could as well have done. He was forced not only to quarry, but to do almost all the rude blocking out of his statues in marble, which should have been intrusted to others, and which

would have been better done by mere mechanical workmen. His very impetuosity, his very genius, unfitted him for such work : while he should have been creating and designing, he was doing the rough work of a stone-cutter. So ardent was his nature, so burning his enthusiasm, that he could not fitly do this work. He was too impatient to get to the form within to take heed of the blows he struck at the shapeless mass that encumbered it, and thus it happened that he often ruined his statue by striking away what could never be replaced.

Vigenero thus describes him : —

“ I have seen Michel Angelo, although sixty years of age, and not one of the most robust of men, smite down more scales from a very hard block of marble in a quarter of an hour, than three young marble-cutters would in three or four times that space of time. He flung himself upon the marble with such impetuosity and fervor, as to induce me to believe that he would break the work into fragments. With a single blow he brought down scales of marble of three or four fingers in breadth, and with such precision to the line marked on the marble, that if he had broken away a very little more, he risked the ruin of the work.”

This is pitiable. This was not the work for a great genius like him, but for a common stone-cutter. What waste of time and energy to no purpose, — nay, to worse than no purpose, — to the danger, often the irreparable injury, of the statue. A dull, plodding, patient workman would have

done it far better. It is as if an architect should be employed in planing the beams or laying the bricks and stones of the building he designed. In fact, Michel Angelo injured, and in some cases nearly ruined, most of his statues by the very impatience of his genius. Thus the back head of the Moses has been struck away by one of these blows, and everywhere a careful eye detects the irreparable blow beyond its true limit. This is not the Michel Angelo whom we are to reverence and admire; this is an *abbozzatore* roughing out the work. There is no difficulty in striking off large cleavings of marble at one stroke — any one can do that; and it is pitiable to find him so engaged.

Where we do find his technical excellence as a sculptor is when he comes to the surface — when with the drill he draws the outline with such force and wonderful precision — when his tooth-chisel models out, with such pure sense of form and such accomplished knowledge, the subtle anatomies of the body and the living curves of the palpitant flesh; and no sculptor can examine the colossal figures of the Medici Chapel without feeling the free and mighty touch of a great master of the marble. Here the hand and the mind work together, and the stone is plastic as clay to his power.

It was not until Michel Angelo was sixty years of age that, on the death of Antonio San Gallo, he was appointed to succeed him as architect, and to design and carry out the building of St. Peter's, then only rising from its foundations. To this ap-

pointment he answered, as he had before objected when commissioned to paint the Sistine Chapel, "Architecture is not my art." But his objections were overruled. The Pope insisted, and he was finally prevailed upon to accept this commission, on the noble condition that his services should be gratuitous, and dedicated to the glory of God and of His Apostle, St. Peter; and to this he was actuated, not only by a grand sentiment, but because he was aware that hitherto the work had been conducted dishonestly, and with a sole view of greed and gain. Receiving nothing himself, he could the more easily suppress all peculation on the part of others.

He was, as he said, an old man in years, but in energy and power he had gained rather than lost, and he set himself at once to work, and designed that grand basilica which has been the admiration of centuries, and to swing, as he said, in air the Pantheon. That mighty dome is but the architectural brother of the great statues in the Medicean Chapel, and the Titan frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Granted all the defects of this splendid basilica, all the objections of all the critics, well or ill founded, and all the deformities grafted on it by his successors — there it is, one of the noblest and grandest of all temples to the Deity, and one of the most beautiful. The dome itself, within and without, is a marvel of beauty and grandeur, to which all other domes, even that of Brunelleschi, must yield precedence. It is the uplifted brow

and forehead that holds the brain of papal Rome, calm, and without a frown, silent, majestic, impressive. The church within has its own atmosphere, which scarcely knows the seasons without; and when the pageant and the pomp of the Catholic hierarchy passes along its nave, and the sunlight builds its golden slanting bridge of light from the lantern to the high altar, and the fumes of incense rise from the clinking censer at High Mass, and the solemn thrill of the silver trumpets sounds and swells and reverberates through the dim mosaicked dome where the saints are pictured above, cold must be his heart and dull his sense who is not touched to reverence. Here is the type of the universal Church — free and beautiful, large and loving; not grim and sombre and sad, like the northern Gothic cathedrals. We grieve over all the bad taste of its interior decoration, all the giant and awkward statues, all the lamentable details, for which he is not responsible; but still, despite them all, the impression is great. When at twilight the shadows obscure all these trivialities, when the lofty cross above the altar rays forth its single illumination and the tasteless details disappear, and the towering arches rise unbroken with their solemn gulfs of darkness, one can feel how great, how astonishing this church is, in its broad architectural features.

At nearly this time Michel Angelo designed the Palazzo Farnese, the Church of Sta Maria degli Angeli in the ruins of the Baths of Diocletian,

the Laurentian Library and the palaces on the Capitol, and various other buildings, all of which bear testimony to his power and skill as an architect.

For St. Peter's as it now stands Michel Angelo is not responsible. His idea was to make all subordinate to the dome; but after his death, the nave was prolonged by Carlo Maderno, the façade completely changed, and the main theme of the building was thus almost obliterated from the front. It is greatly to be regretted that his original design was not carried out. Every change from it was an injury. The only point from which one can get an idea of his intention is from behind or at the side, and there its colossal character is shown.

We have thus far considered Michel Angelo as a sculptor, painter, and architect. It remains to consider him as a poet. Nor in his poetry do we find any difference of character from what he exhibited in his other arts. He is rough, energetic, strong, full of high ideas, struggling with fate, oppressed and weary with life. He has none of the sweet numbers of Petrarca, or the lively spirit of Ariosto, or the chivalric tones of Tasso. His verse is rude, craggy, almost disjointed at times, and with little melody in it, but it is never feeble. It was not his art, he might have said, with more propriety than when he thus spoke of painting and architecture. Lofty thoughts have wrestled their way into verse, and constrained a rhythmic form

to obey them. But there is a constant struggle for him in a form which is not plastic to his touch. Still his poems are strong in their crabbedness, and stand like granite rocks in the general sweet mush of Italian verse.

Such, then, was Michel Angelo, — sculptor, painter, architect, poet, engineer, and able in all these arts. Nor would it have been possible for him to be so great in any one of them had he not trained his mind to all; for all the arts are but the various articulations of the self-same power, as the fingers are of the hand, and each lends aid to the other. Only by having all can the mind have its full grasp of art. It is too often insisted in our days that a man to be great in one art must devote himself exclusively to that; or if he be solicited by any other, he must merely toy with it. Such was not the doctrine of the artists of old, either in ancient days of Greece or at the epoch of the Renaissance. Phidias was a painter and architect as well as a sculptor, and so were nearly all the men of his time. Giotto, Leonardo, Ghiberti, Michel Angelo, Verrocchio, Cellini, Raffaele, — in a word, all the great men of the glorious age in Italy were accomplished in many arts. They more or less trained themselves in all. It might be said that not a single great man was not versed in more than one art. Thence it was that they derived their power. It does not suffice that the arm alone is strong; the whole body strikes with every blow.

The frescoes in the Sistine Chapel at Rome, and the statues in the Medicean Chapel at Florence, are the greatest monuments of Michel Angelo's power as an artist. Whatever may be the defects of these great works, they are of a Titanic brood, that have left no successors, as they had no progenitors. They defy criticism, however just, and stand by themselves outside the beaten track of art, to challenge our admiration. So also, despite all his faults and defects, how grand a figure Michel Angelo himself is in history, how high a place he holds ! His name itself is a power. He is one of the mighty masters that the world cannot forget. Kings and emperors die and are forgotten, — dynasties change and governments fall, — but he, the silent, stern worker, reigns unmoved in the great realm of art.

Let us leave this great presence, and pass into the other splendid chapel of the Medici which adjoins this, and mark the contrast, and see what came of some of the titular monarchs of his time who fretted their brief hour across the stage, and wore their purple, and issued their edicts, and were fawned upon and flattered in their pride of ephemeral power.

Passing across a corridor, you enter this domed chapel or mausoleum — and a splendid mausoleum it is. Its shape is octagonal. It is 63 metres in height, or about 200 feet, and is lined throughout with the richest marbles — of jasper, coralline, persicata, chalcedony, mother-of-pearl, agate, giallo

and verde antico, porphyry, lapis-lazuli, onyx, oriental alabaster, and beautiful petrified woods; and its cost was no less than thirty-two millions of francs of to-day. Here were to lie the bodies of the Medici family, in honor of whom it was raised. On each of the eight sides is a vast arch, and inside six of these are six immense sarcophagi, four of red Egyptian granite and two of gray, with the arms of the family elaborately carved upon them, and surmounted with coronets adorned with precious gems. In two of the arches are colossal portrait statues, — one of Ferdinand III. in golden bronze, by Pietro Tacca; and the other of Cosimo II. in brown bronze, by John of Bologna, and both in the richest royal robes. The sarcophagi have the names of Ferdinand II., Cosimo III., Francesco I., Cosimo I. All that wealth and taste can do has been done to celebrate and perpetuate the memory of these royal dukes that reigned over Florence in its prosperous days.

And where are the bodies of these royal dukes? Here comes the saddest of stories. When the early bodies were first buried I know not; but in 1791 Ferdinand III. gathered together all the coffins in which they were laid, and had them piled together pell-mell in the subterranean vaults of this chapel, scarcely taking heed to distinguish them one from another; and here they remained, neglected and uncared for, and only protected from plunder by two wooden doors with common

keys, until 1857. Then shame came over those who had the custody of the place, and it was determined to put them in order. In 1818 there had been a rumor that these Medicean coffins had been violated and robbed of all the articles of value which they contained. But little heed was paid to this rumor, and it was not until thirty-nine years after that an examination into the real facts was made. It was then discovered that the rumor was well founded. The forty-nine coffins containing the remains of the family were taken down one by one, and a sad state of things was exposed. Some of them had been broken into and plundered, some were the hiding-places of vermin, and such was the nauseous odor they gave forth, that at least one of the persons employed in taking them down lost his life by inhaling it. Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay, had become hideous and noisome. Of many of the ducal family nothing remained but fragments of bones and a handful of dust. But where the hand of the robber had not been, the splendid dresses covered with jewels, the silks and satins wrought over with gold embroidery, the richly chased helmets and swords crusted with gems and gold, still survived, though those who had worn them in their splendid pageants were but dust and crumbling bones within them.

“Here were sands, ignoble things,
Dropped from the ruined sides of kings.”

In many cases, where all else that bore the im-

press of life had vanished, the hair still remained almost as fresh as ever. Some bodies which had been carefully embalmed were in fair preservation, but some were fearfully altered. Ghastly and grinning skulls were there, adorned with crowns of gold. Dark and parchment-like faces were seen with their golden locks rich as ever, and twisted with gems and pearls and costly nets. The Cardinal Princes still wore their mitres and red cloaks, their purple pianete and glittering rings, their crosses of white enamel, their jacinths and amethysts and sapphires — all had survived their priestly selves. The dried bones of Vittoria della Rovere Montefeltro (whose very name is poetic) were draped in a robe of black silk of exquisite texture, trimmed with black and white lace, while on her breast lay a great golden medal, and on one side were her emblems and on the other her portrait as she was in life, as if to say, “Look on this picture and on this.” Alas, poor humanity! Beside her lay, almost a mere skeleton, Anna Luisa, the Electress Palatine of the Rhine, and daughter of Cosimo III., with the electoral crown surmounting her ghastly brow and face of black parchment, a crucifix of silver on her breast, and at her side a medal with her effigy and name; while near her lay her uncle, Francesco Maria, a mere mass of dust and robes and rags. Many had been stripped by profane hands of all their jewels and insignia, and among these were Cosimo I. and II., Eleonora de Toledo, Maria Christina, and others, to the number of twenty. The two bodies

which were found in the best preservation were those of the Grand Duchess Giovanna d' Austria, the wife of Francesco I., and their daughter Anna. Corruption had scarcely touched them, and there they lay fresh in color as if they had just died — the mother in her red satin, trimmed with lace, her red silk stockings and high-heeled shoes, the ear-rings hanging from her ears, and her blond hair fresh as ever. And so, after centuries had passed, the truth became evident of the rumor that ran through Florence at the time of their death, that they had died of poison. The arsenic which had taken from them their life had preserved their bodies in death. Giovanni delle Bande Nere was also here, his battles all over, his bones scattered and loose within his iron armor, and his rusted helmet with its visor down. And this was all that was left of the great Medici. Is there any lesson sadder than this? These royal persons, once so gay and proud and powerful, some of whom patronized Michel Angelo, and extended to him their gracious favor, and honored him perhaps with a smile, now so utterly dethroned by death, their names scarcely known, or, if known, not revered, while the poor stern artist they looked down upon sits like a monarch on the throne of fame, and, though dead, rules with his spirit and by his works in the august realm of art. Who has not heard his name? Who has not felt his influence? And ages shall come, and generations shall pass, and he will keep his kingdom.

PHIDIAS, AND THE ELGIN MARBLES.

THE marble statues in the pediment of the Parthenon at Athens, as well as the metopes and *bassi-relievi* which adorned the temple dedicated to Minerva, are popularly supposed to have been either the work of Phidias himself, or executed by his scholars after his designs and under his superintendence. This opinion, by dint of constant repetition, has finally become accepted as an undoubted fact; but a careful examination into the original authorities will show that it is unsupported by any satisfactory evidence.

The main ground upon which it is founded is that Phidias was appointed by Pericles director of the public works at Athens, and occupied that office during the building of the Parthenon. From being the director he is supposed to have been the designer at least, not only of the temple, but of all the works of art contained in it. This deduction is certainly very broad to be drawn from so small a fact, even if that fact should be established beyond doubt. It resembles the modern instance of the popular attribution of so many nameless statues of the Renaissance to Michel Angelo. And there seems to be about as much reason to suppose that Phidias executed or

designed all the sculpture of the Parthenon, because he was the general superintendent of public works at Athens, as to attribute to Michel Angelo the authorship of all the statues in St. Peter's, because he was mainly the architect and superintendent of the work of that great Christian temple.

The first fact to be opposed to this entirely gratuitous assumption is, that during the execution of the great public works at Athens under the administration of Pericles, Phidias himself was occupied on his great chryselephantine statue of Athena, which was the chief ornament of the Parthenon; and this alone, without considering the other great statues in ivory, and gold, and bronze, on which he was probably engaged at or near the same period, was amply sufficient to occupy his entire time and thoughts.

The next most important fact is that no ancient contemporary author asserts that any of the sculptures of the Parthenon, with the exception of the chryselephantine statue of Athena, were executed by him; and considering his fame in his own and subsequent ages, it seems most improbable, to say the least, that, had he been the author of any of the other statues and *alti* or *bassi relievi*, not only no mention of this fact, but no allusion to it, should ever have been made.

In the next place, it will be found, on careful examination of the ancient writers and of other facts bearing on the question, to be exceedingly

doubtful whether Phidias ever made any statues in marble. If he did execute any works in this material, they were exceptions to his general practice, his art being chiefly in toreutic work, and in gold and ivory, or bronze. It was in these arts that he established his fame; and there is no mention of any work by him in marble within five hundred years of his death.

Plutarch, in his *Life of Pericles*, says that "Phidias was appointed by Pericles superintendent of all the public edifices, though the Athenians had other eminent architects, and excellent workmen." It is plain, however, that even if Phidias was director of the works, Plutarch does not mean to represent him as the architect or artist by whom they were either designed or executed; for he immediately adds that "the Parthenon was built by Callicrates and Ictinus." Probably also Carpion was another architect actively engaged upon it, for he and Ictinus wrote a work upon it. Plutarch then goes on to enumerate other buildings built by different artists at this very period during which Phidias was director of public works. Afterwards he positively states that "the golden statue of Minerva was the workmanship of Phidias, and his name is inscribed on the pedestal;"¹ and adds that, "as we have already observed, through the friendship of Peri-

¹ Whether this inscription was placed there during the life of Phidias does not appear; but it is highly improbable, and not in harmony with the practice of the Greeks.

cles, he had the direction of everything, and all the artists received his orders." But he does not say or intimate that Phidias himself made anything in the Parthenon except the statue of Athena, unless "having the direction of everything" is to be understood as equivalent to making everything himself. Such an interpretation is, however, absolutely in contradiction with his statements that the Parthenon was built by Calliocrates and Ictinus; that the Temple of Initiation at Eleusis was begun by Coræbus, carried on by Metagenes, and finished by Xenocles of Cholargos; that the vestibule of the Citadel was finished in five years by Mnesicles; and that the Odeum was built under the direction of Pericles, by which he incurred much ridicule.

Strabo, however, would seem to differ from Plutarch on this point, and to attribute to Pericles himself, and not to Phidias, the general superintendence of the public works. Speaking of the Temple of the Eleusinian Ceres at Eleusis, and the mystic inclosure, *Σηκός*, built by Ictinus, he adds, "This person it was who made the Parthenon in the Acropolis in honor of Minerva, when Pericles was superintendent of the public works;" and in another passage he mentions "the Parthenon built by Ictinus, in which is the Minerva in ivory, the work of Phidias," — thus clearly distinguishing the work of Phidias, and saying not a word about the metopes, *bassi-relievi*, or statues in the pediment, or indicating him as their author.

But granting that Plutarch is right, it is quite manifest that it was impossible for Phidias to have had more than an official superintendence of these great works. The sole administration of public affairs was conferred on Pericles in B. C. 444, and it was not until then or subsequently that Phidias could have been appointed to this office. Among the public works built at this period were the Propylæa, the Odeum, the Parthenon, the Temples of Ceres at Eleusis, of Juno at Argos, of Apollo at Phigaleia, and of Zeus at Olympia — the last being finished in B. C. 433. Within these eleven years, therefore, Phidias is supposed to have superintended all or a portion of these temples, with their manifold sculptures and statues, and, in addition, to have made the colossal chryselephantine statues of Athena in the Parthenon, Zeus at Olympia, Aphrodite Urania at Elis, and also, perhaps, the Athena Areia in bronze at Plataea.

But excluding all consideration as to the other temples, and confining ourselves solely to the Parthenon, let us see if it be possible, with all his occupations, for him to have executed the Athena alone, and also executed or even designed the other sculptures of the Parthenon.

In the tympanum there are 44 statues, all of heroic size. There were 92 metopes representing the battles of the Centaurs and Lapithæ, and the frieze, which was covered with elaborate *bass-relievi* representing processions of men, women, and horses with riders, was about 524 feet in length.

There seems to be no distinct statement of the exact time when the Parthenon was begun; but it certainly was after the appointment of Pericles in 444 B. C., and we know that it was finished and dedicated in 438 B. C. This gives us six years as the outside possible limits within which it was built. Now, if Phidias made, executed, or even modeled or designed, only the 44 statues of the tympanum within this period, he must have been a man of astonishing activity and rapidity in his work. To do this he must have made more than seven heroic statues in each year, or more than one statue every two months for six years. This may safely be said to be impossible, unless we mean by the term designing the making of small sketches in clay or terra cotta, with little elaboration or finish. But if we add the 92 metopes and the 524 feet of figures in relief, the mere designing in clay of all the figures and groups becomes impossible.

But this is not enough: we know that he executed in this time the colossal chryselephantine statue of Athena, — and to the other statues, therefore, he could only have given the overplus of his time which was not needed for his great work. Nor are we without data by which we can estimate the probable time given to the Athena alone. At Elis he was engaged exclusively from four to five years upon the Zeus, in the temple at Olympia; and in the execution of this colossal work we know that he had the assistance of other artists, and es-

pecially of Kolotes; and we also know that he did nothing else in this temple, the statues in the two tympana having been executed by Alcamenes and Pæonios. In all probability about the same amount of time was given to the Athena. Supposing, then, that he began his work on the Parthenon immediately after the appointment of Pericles, which is most improbable, he would have had about a year's time in which to make all the statues and reliefs in the Parthenon, and exercise supervision of the public works. If he modeled the designs only of the tympana in this period, he must have made a statue in eight days. If he also modeled the designs of the metopes, 92 in number, of two figures each, he must have given less than three days to each, without allowing any time for the performance of his functions of general director, and supposing him also to have worked without a day's intermission. Such suppositions must be rejected as approaching so near to impossibilities as to render them utterly untenable. All probabilities are in favor of the supposition that, during the period in which the Parthenon was constructed, Phidias was employed solely upon the statue of Athena, and upon the duties incident to his position as superintendent of public works.

This conclusion will seem all the more probable when we consider that Phidias, far from being rapid in his execution, was, on the contrary, a slow and elaborate worker, devoting much time to the

careful and minute finish of his statues. Themistius is reported by Plutarch as saying of him, that "though Phidias was skillful enough to make in gold or ivory" (it will be observed that he speaks of his work in no other materials) "the true shape of god or man, yet he did require abundance of time and leisure to his work; so he is reported to have spent much time upon the base and sandals of his statue of the goddess Athena."¹

We must also add another consideration, and it is this: that in the time of Phidias it was necessary for a sculptor to do far more with his own hand than it is now. Modern facilities have greatly abridged the personal labor of the sculptor in marble or bronze. The present method of casting in plaster, which was then unknown, or at least unpracticed, enables the sculptor of our days to elaborate his work to the utmost finish, in its full size, in the clay model; and when this is completed and cast in such a permanent material as plaster, the workman has an absolute model, which he may, to a certain extent, copy with almost mathematical accuracy. The greater portion of the work may therefore be now committed to inferior hands, as it requires only mechanical dexterity and care; while it merely remains for the sculptor himself to finish the work in marble, and add such elaboration of detail and expression as he may desire. But in the time of Phidias this method was un-

¹ Themistius, *Orat. ad eum qui postulaverat ut ex tempore sermonem haberet.*

known ; and the sculptor himself was forced to do a much greater part of his work in marble. In like manner, the modern method of casting in bronze is so admirable that the labor of the artist in finishing the cast is comparatively small ; but in the earlier period of bronze casting, there is no doubt that the cast originally was far more imperfect, and the labor of the sculptor in finishing far greater. These facts will in some measure seem to account for the comparatively long time during which Phidias was engaged on his works. As there evidently was no full-sized and completely finished model of the Athena or Zeus for the workmen mechanically to copy, Phidias was forced to work out the details of his great works with his own hands, moulding and designing them as he went on ; and this he was obliged to do, not in a plastic material like clay, but in the final material of his statue — whether gold, ivory, or bronze. Assistants of course he had, and undoubtedly they were very numerous. Plutarch tells us that the public works gave employment to carpenters, modelers, brass cutters and stampers, chisellers and engravers, dyers, workers of ivory and gold, and even weavers ;¹ and some of these men certainly

¹ τέκτονες, πλάσται, χαλκοτύποι, λιθουργοί, βαφεῖς, χρυσοῦ μαλακτῆρες καὶ ἐλέφαντος ζωγράφοι, ποικιλταῖ, τορευταῖ. This passage is generally cited as a statement by Plutarch that Phidias employed all these men ; but in fact he is only urging, in justification of Pericles, and in answer to attacks made against him for expending such large sums of money in the public works, that these works gave employment to the enumerated classes of artists and mechanics.

worked for Phidias. In fact, he used the hands of others as much as he could — as any sensible artist would ; but a great part of his invention and work was carried on in hard and difficult materials, instead of being perfected in a facile clay, as it would be by a modern sculptor ; and this carried with it, of course, a great expense of time and labor.

With these facts in view, and considering the great size and elaboration of the ivory and gold statue of Athena, it is quite evident that the few years which elapsed between the commencement of the Parthenon and its dedication would have been amply occupied by this work alone, — and with the other duties incident to his position as superintendent of public works. More than this, we shall find it difficult to fix the time when he made some other of his statues, unless it was during these six years ; and it would seem probable that at or about this time he must have been engaged upon the Athena Areia for the Plataeans, or at least upon his chryselephantine statue of the celestial Venus for the Eleans.

Before proceeding farther in this argument, it may be as well to give a glance at the artistic career of Phidias, and the various works executed by him, or assigned to him by different writers of an after-age.

A good deal of discussion has arisen as to the age of Phidias at his death. The date of his birth is distinctly given by no one, and is purely a

matter of conjecture. Thiersch, among others, supposes him to have been already an artist of some distinction in the 72·3 Olympiad, or about B. C. 490 — the date of the battle of Marathon; and this opinion he founds chiefly on the fact that the *Athēna Promachos*, as well as the group of statues at Delphi and the *aerolith* of *Athēna* at *Plataea* made by him, were cast, according to *Pausanias*, from the tithe of the spoils taken from the *Medes* who disembarked at *Marathon*. Other writers suppose him to have been born at about the date of the battle of *Marathon*, and that the statues executed by him out of the spoils were made some twenty-five years later. Mr. Philip Smith, in his “*Dictionary of Biography and Mythology*,” taking this view, places his birth in the 73d Olympiad; and Müller is of the same opinion. Dr. Brunn, on the contrary, thinks it probable that he was born about the 70th Olympiad, and Welcker and Preller agree substantially with him.

According to the supposition of Thiersch, placing his birth at 67·2 Olympiad, or B. C. 510, he would have been twenty years of age at the battle of *Marathon* (B. C. 490), seventy-two years of age when he finished the *chryselephantine* statue of *Athēna* in the *Parthenon* in 85·1 Olympiad (B. C. 438), and seventy-seven years of age when he finished the *chryselephantine* statue of *Zeus* at *Olympia* in 87·3 Olympiad (B. C. 433). This, if we suppose that five years elapsed after the battle of *Marathon* before the group of statues at

Delphi was executed, would make Phidias twenty-five years old when he made them.

Taking the supposition that he was born in the 72·3 Olympiad, and that the statues at Delphi were modeled twenty-five years after, this would make him also twenty-five years of age when he executed them ; and fifty-two years of age, instead of seventy-two, when he finished the Athena of the Parthenon ; and fifty-seven, instead of seventy-seven, when he completed the Zeus — shortly previous to his death.

Dr. Brunn's supposition that he was born in the 70th Olympiad, which is also held by Welcker and Preller, would make him fifty-six when he made the Athena, and sixty-one when he made the Zeus.

In opposition to these two later suppositions, there is this one undisputed fact, that on the shield of the Athena of the Parthenon he introduced his own likeness as well as that of Pericles, in which he is described as representing himself as a bald old man (*πρεσβύτου φαλακρός*) hurling a stone, which he lifts with both hands, while Pericles is portrayed as a vigorous warrior in the full prime of manhood. He must therefore have intended to represent himself as a much older man than Pericles ; and Pericles at this time was over fifty-two years of age¹ — which is the age as-

¹ The date of the birth of Pericles is unknown, but he began to take part in public affairs in B. C. 469, when he could not probably have been less than twenty-one years of age. This would place his birth at 490. He died in 429 ; and this reckoning would make him only sixty-one at his death.

signed to Phidias himself by some writers. Besides, a man of fifty-two, or even of fifty-six, could scarcely be accurately described as an "old man;" and an artist making a portrait of himself at that age would be inclined to give himself a little more youth than he really possessed. The mere fact that he represents himself as old shows that he had in all probability arrived at a more advanced period of life, when one accepts old age as too notorious and well-established a fact to be disguised. The supposition of Thiersch, therefore, would, in view of this fact alone, seem to be the best founded, as this would make him seventy-two years old when the *Athena* was completed, — an age which might fairly be called old.

Mr. Smith seems to think it very improbable that at the age of eighty-three Phidias could have undertaken to execute the *Zeus*; but the fact is, that Thiersch's conjecture would only make him seventy-three when the *Zeus* was begun, and certainly at this age it is by no means uncommon for sculptors to undertake large works. Tenerani, for instance, in our own time, had passed that age when he executed the monument of Pius VIII., one of his largest works, and consisting of four colossal figures. Besides, it is to be taken into account that the *Zeus* was the last work of Phidias, and that death overtook him immediately after.

On the whole, it would seem that the probabilities of the period of his birth lie between the mid-

dle of the 67th Olympiad (B. C. 510) and the beginning of the 70th Olympiad (B. C. 500).

There is also another consideration which is entitled to weight in this connection. Suppose Phidias to have commenced his artistic career four years after the battle of Marathon — in B. C. 490 (Olymp. 72·3). From that time to B. C. 444 (Olymp. 83·4), when he began the Athena of the Parthenon, there are forty-five years; and during this time he is supposed to have executed six colossal statues in bronze or acrolith, — two of which, the Athena Promachos and the Athena Areia, were from 50 to 60 feet in height — and one, the Athena Lemnia, was considered as perhaps his most beautiful work. Besides this, he executed thirteen statues at Delphi, the size of which is not stated. Nineteen statues in forty-five years give a little over $2\frac{1}{3}$ years to each; and if the thirteen statues at Delphi were colossal, this will certainly seem insufficient for their execution, when we keep in mind the facts — 1st, That Phidias was a slow and elaborate worker; 2d, That of necessity he must have done a great part of the work in bronze personally; 3d, That he was occupied four years on the Zeus alone; 4th, That two of these statues, at least, were larger than the Athena of the Parthenon, though not in the same material. It is, however, probable, that the thirteen statues at Delphi were not of colossal proportions, but rather of heroic size, and therefore requiring less time in their execution; and

this would enable us to assign a longer time to the mighty colossi of Athena.

Certainly, however, if we accept the theory that Phidias commenced working twenty-five years after the battle of Marathon, we are in very great straits as to time, unless the date when these colossal statues were made be incorrect, and unless some of them were made after the Athena of the Parthenon. This, again, we cannot accept; for, from the date of the completion of the Athena of the Parthenon until his death, there are only at most some seven years, four of which were dedicated to the Zeus. We are then forced to believe that these nineteen statues were made in twenty years; and this is certainly very improbable.

In this view other difficulties also appear, which it would seem impossible to overcome, if we accept all the statues attributed to Phidias as having been executed by him; for in such case, not only must he have made these nineteen statues in twenty years, but some fifteen more at least. Taking, then, the longest supposition as to his age, and giving him forty-five years of labor for some thirty-five statues, the time will altogether be too restricted. It may be as well at this point of the discussion to give a catalogue of the works which he is supposed to have executed, and to examine into the probable authenticity of some of them. The list is as follows: —

1. The Athena, at Pellene, in Achaia. This

was probably his first great work, if we credit Pausanias, who says it was made before the Athena of the Acropolis and the Athena at Plataea. "They say," says Pausanias, "that this statue was made by Phidias, and before he made that for the Athenians, which is in their town, or that which is among the Plataeans."

2-14. Thirteen statues in bronze, made from the spoils of the Persian war, and dedicated at Delphi as a votive offering by the Athenians, representing Athena, Apollo, Miltiades, Erechtheus, Cecrops, Pandion, Peleus, Antiochus, Ægeus, Acamas, Codrus, Theseus, and Phyleus. "All these statues," says Pausanias, "were made by Phidias;" and on his sole authority the statement stands. He does not mention their size.

15. The colossal Athena Promachos in bronze in the Acropolis. This statue, which was from 50 to 60 feet in height, was made from the spoils of Marathon. It represented the goddess holding up her spear and shield in the attitude of a combatant, and was visible to approaching vessels as far off as Sunium. "On the shield," says Pausanias, "the battle of the Centaurs and Lapithæ was carved by Mys; but Parrhasius, the son of Evenor, painted this for Mys, and likewise the other figures that are seen on the shield." Pausanias, however, must be mistaken in this, since Parrhasius lived about Olymp. 95 (B. C. 400), or about thirty years after the death of Phidias; and it would scarcely be probable that this shield

would have remained uncarved and unpainted for from seventy to eighty years after the statue was executed.

16. The Athena Areia, at Plataea. This was an aerolith, also made from the spoils of Marathon. "This statue," says Pausanias, "is made of wood, and is gilt, except the face and the extremities of the hands and feet, which are of Pentelic marble. Its magnitude is nearly equal to that of the Minerva, which the Athenians dedicated on their tower" (the Promachos). "Phidias too made this statue for the Plataeenses."

17. The Athena in bronze, in the Acropolis, called the Lemnia, which, according to Pausanias, "deserves to be seen above all the works of Phidias." Lucian also speaks specially of its beauty.

18. The Athena mentioned by Pliny as having been dedicated at Rome, near the Temple of Fortune, by Paulus Æmilius. But whether this originally stood in the Acropolis is unknown. Possibly or probably it was the same statue as that last mentioned.

19. The Cliduchus (Key-Bearer), also mentioned by Pliny, may have been an Athena; but more probably it represented a priestess holding the keys, symbolic of initiation into the mysteries.

20. The Athena of the Parthenon, in ivory and gold.

21. The Zeus at Olympia, in ivory and gold.

22. The Aphrodite Urania, in ivory and gold, at Elis. This statue, attributed by Pausanias to

Phidias, "stands with one of its feet on a tortoise."

23. A bronze figure of Apollo Parnopius, in the Acropolis. The authority for this statue is Pausanias, who states that "it is said to be the work of Phidias," — λέγουσι Φειδίαν ποιῆσαι. Tradition alone gives it to Phidias.

24. Aphrodite Urania, *in marble*, in the temple near the Ceramicus. This also is attributed by Pausanias to Phidias.

25. A statue of the Mother of the Gods, sitting on a throne, supported by lions, in the Metroum near the Ceramicus. This is attributed by Pausanias and Arrian to Phidias. Pliny, on the contrary, says it is by Agoracritos.

26. The Golden Throne, so called, and supposed generally to be that of the Athena. What this was is very dubious. It could not be the throne of the Athena, for she had no throne, and probably was another name for the Athena herself. Plutarch calls it "τῆς θεοῦ τὸ χρυσοῦν ἔδος," and Isocrates, "τὸ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἔδος."

27. Statue of Athena, at Elis, in ivory and gold. Pausanias says it is attributed to Phidias, — "φασὶν Φειδίου," — *they say* it is by Phidias. Pliny, however, says it was executed by Kolotes.

28. Statue of Æsculapius, at Epidaurus. This is attributed to Phidias by Athenagoras (Legat. pro Arist.); but by Pausanias to Thrasymedes of Paros.

29. At the entrance of the Ismenion, near

Thebes, are two *marble* statues called Pronaoi — one of Athena, ascribed by Pausanias to Scopas, and one of Hermes, ascribed by Pausanias to Phidias.

30. A Zeus, at the Olympieum at Megara. The head of this statue was made of gold and ivory, the rest of clay and gypsum. “This work *is said* (λέγουσι) to have been made by Theocosmos, a citizen of Megara, with the assistance of Phidias,” says Pausanias, and it was interrupted by the breaking out of the Peloponnesian war. Probably it was executed solely by Theocosmos.

31. The statue of Nemesis, at Rhamnus, *in marble*, attributed to Phidias by Pausanias; but there can be little question that it was made by Agoracritos.

32. The Amazon. This statue, which is highly praised by Lucian, was, according to Pliny, made by Phidias in competition with Polyclitus, Ctesilaus, Cydon, and Phradmon; the first prize being given to Polyclitus, the second to Phidias, the third to Ctesilaus, and the fourth to Cydon.

33, 34, 35. Three bronze statues mentioned by Pliny, the subjects not stated, and placed by Catulus in the Temple of Fortune.

36. The marble Venus in the portico of Octavia, which Pliny says “is said to be by Phidias.”

37. The Horse-Tamer, in marble, now existing, and standing before the Quirinal in Rome.

There are some other statues attributed to Phidias by various writers, which may be at once

rejected. Among them were the statues of Zeus and Apollo at Patara, in Lycia, which were supposed by Clemens Alexandrinus to have been by Phidias, but which are clearly settled to have been by Bryaxis. So also the Kairos, or Opportunity, by Lysippus, was attributed to Phidias by Ausonius; and the famous Venus of the Gardens (ἐν κήποις), by Alcamenes, was said to have received its finishing touches from him.

It will, I think, be clear that many of the statues in the foregoing list must also be rejected. In the last ten years of his life he executed only two statues, each colossal — the Athena of the Parthenon, and the Zeus at Olympia. Taking the earliest date of his artistic career at five years before the battle of Marathon, according to the theory of Thiersch, he would, as we have seen, have had forty-five years only in which to execute the other thirty-five statues, besides all the other and minute work to which, as we shall see, he gave his genius. Several, at least, of these statues are colossal, several elaborately wrought in ivory and gold; and it is in the highest degree improbable that they could have been executed in this period of time.

On examination of the list, three at least will be seen to rest purely on tradition. The Apollo Parnopius and the Athena at Elis are mentioned by Pausanias as being “said to be” by Phidias. The Venus of the portico of Octavia “is said to be by Phidias,” says Pliny. Little weight can be given

to current and common opinion in respect to the authorship of works of art executed many centuries before, about which there is no written documentary proof. In our own time it is always exceedingly difficult, and often impossible, to decide upon the authorship of pictures and statues of one hundred years ago. Double that period, and the difficulty would of course be enormously increased. Now Pausanias wrote some six hundred years after the death of Phidias, and yet we are ready to accept as authoritative his passing statement that a certain statue "is said" to be by Phidias. How many statues at the present day are said to be by Michel Angelo, which he never saw! How many spurious Raffaelles and Titians adorn our galleries! Do we not know that every traveler in Italy sees statues "said to be" by Michel Angelo in such numbers that ten Michel Angelos could not have made them all? There is scarcely a church that does not boast of something from his hand. There is no reason to suppose that the case was not similar in Greece fifteen hundred years ago, and none to suppose that Pausanias was superior in artistic knowledge and acumen to any average intelligent traveler of his day. He did not stop to investigate the grounds upon which the popular or accidental account given him as to the authorship of any work was founded, nor does he pretend to have done so. He took it for what it was worth. "They say the statue is by Phidias." He had, besides, as far as we know, no written

authority for what he said, — at least he cites none.

Again, in respect to the authorship of some of the statues of which he speaks, he at times differs from other writers, and at times unquestionably mistakes. Thus, to cite only examples in the case of Phidias, the statue of Athena, at Elis, he attributes to Phidias, while Pliny says it was by Kolotes. Again, the statue of Æsculapius, at Epidaurus, he attributes to Thrasymedes of Paros, while Athenagoras says it was the work of Phidias. In like manner, the statue of the Mother of the Gods, which Pausanias and Arrian give to Phidias, Pliny declares to be the work of Agoracritos. Still more, Pausanias distinctly affirms that the Nemesis at Rhamnus was executed by Phidias; while Pliny, on the contrary, asserts it to be the work of Agoracritos. And in this assertion Pliny is borne out by Zenobius, who gives us the inscription on the branch in the hand of Nemesis: ΑΓΟΡΑΚΡΙΤΟΣ ΠΑΡΙΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΗΣΕΝ. Strabo, however, hesitates between Agoracritos and an unknown Diodotos, and says it was remarkable for beauty and size, and might well compete with the works of Phidias; and to confuse matters still more, at a later time Pomponius Mela, Hesychius, and Solon agree with Pausanias. There would seem, after weighing all authorities, to be little doubt that the Nemesis was the work of Agoracritos.

Nothing could more clearly show the easy way in

which traditions grow like barnacles upon artists and works of art, than the story connected with this statue. Pliny says that Agoracritos contended with Alcamenes in making a statue of Venus ; and the preference being given to that of Alcamenes, he was so indignant at the decision that he immediately made certain alterations in his own statue, called it Nemesis, and sold it to the people of Rhamnus, on condition that it should not be set up in Athens. This is absurd enough. After a statue of Venus is finished, what sort of change would be required to make a Nemesis of it? But let us see how well this statue would have represented Aphrodite. Pausanias says that “out of the marble brought by the barbarians to Marathon for a trophy Phidias made a statue of Nemesis, and on the head of the goddess there is a crown adorned with stags and images of victory of no great magnitude ; and in the left hand she holds the branch of an ash-tree, and in her right a cup, on which the Æthiopians are carved — why, I cannot assign any reason.” Now, in the first place, the assertion that it was a work of marble brought to make a trophy at Marathon is a myth. In the next place, these are certainly peculiar characteristics for an Aphrodite. The statue itself was undoubtedly a noble statue, however, and the best work of Agoracritos. As it was not the custom for sculptors in Greece to inscribe their names on their statues, it may have happened that it soon came to be popularly attributed to Phidias,

according to the general rule, that to the master is ascribed the best work of his pupil and his school. Then it was, probably, that the inscription was placed on the statue, reclaiming it for its true author. However this may be, Photias, Suidas, and Tzetzes, as late as from the tenth to the twelfth century, are determined that Phidias shall have it, despite the inscription; and accordingly they report and publish, many long centuries after—and gifted by what second-sight into the past who can tell?—that though it is true that the statue is supposed to have been executed by Agoracritos, yet in fact it was made by Phidias, who generously allowed Agoracritos to put his name on it, and pass it off as his own.

In further illustration of this parasitic growth of legend and tradition may be also cited in this connection the story told by Tzetzes the Grammarian, some seventeen centuries after the death of Phidias. According to him, Alcamenes and Phidias competed in making a statue of Athena, to be placed in an elevated position; and when their figures were finished and exposed to public view near the level of the eye, the preference was decidedly given to the figure of Alcamenes; but as soon as the figures were elevated to their destined position, the public declared immediately in favor of that of Phidias. The object of the writer of this story is to prove the extraordinary skill of Phidias in optical perspective, and to show that he had calculated his proportions with such

foresight, that though the figure, when seen near the level of the eye, appeared inharmonious, it became perfectly harmonious when seen from far below. Now all that any artist could do to produce this effect would be, perhaps, to give more length to his figures in comparison with their breadth. This, however, would be not only a doubtful expedient in itself, but entirely at variance with the practice of Phidias. His figures, like all those of his period, were stouter in proportion to their breadth, and particularly stouter in the relation of the lower limbs to the torso, than the figures of a later period. The canon of proportion accepted then was that of Polyclitus; and the proportions were afterward varied and the lower limbs were lengthened, first by Euphranor, and subsequently still more by Lysippus. Any distortion or falsification of proportion would be effective solely in a statue with one point of view, and exhibited as a relief; for if it were a figure in the round, and seen from all points, the perspective would be utterly false, unless the proportions were harmonious in themselves and true to nature. Tzetzes is a great gossip, and peculiarly untrustworthy in his statements; but his story is of such a nature as to please the ignorant public, and it has been accepted and repeated constantly, though he does not give any authority for it, and plainly invented it out "of the depths of his own consciousness," as the German *savant* did the camel.

One cannot be too careful in accepting traditions about artists or their works. The public invents its facts, and believes what it invents. Very few of the pleasing anecdotes connected with artists will bear critical examination, any more than the famous sayings attributed on great occasions to extraordinary men ; still the grand phrase of *Cambronne* is as gravely repeated in history as if it had some foundation in fact, and everybody believes that *Da Vinci* died in the arms of *Francis I.* Perhaps it is scarcely worth while to break up such pleasant traditions, and certainly the public resists such attempts. It is so delightful to think that the gallant and accomplished King of France supported the great Italian artist, and soothed his last moments, that it seems sheer brutality to dissipate such an illusion ; yet, unfortunately, we know that *Leonardo* died at *Cloux*, near *Amboise*, on May 2, 1679,—and from a journal kept by the king, and still (disgracefully enough) existing in the imperial library in Paris, we know that on that very day he held his Court at *St. Germain-en-Laye* ; and besides this, *Lomazzo* distinctly tells us that the king first heard the news of *Leonardo's* death from *Melzi* ; while *Melzi* himself, who wrote to *Leonardo's* friend immediately after his death, makes no mention of such a fact.

But to return from this digression to a consideration of the list of works attributed to *Phidias*. We have already seen that in regard to six of

the statues there are, to say the least, strong doubts as to his authorship; but still more must be eliminated. The Zeus of the Olympieum at Megara "is said," according to Pausanias, "to have been made by Theocosmos, with the assistance of Phidias." This again is mere tradition, which is so weak that it only pretends that Phidias assisted Theocosmos. Phidias assisting Theocosmos has a strange sound; and it is plain that Theocosmos is the real author of this statue, even granting that the great master may have helped the lesser one.

Again, Pausanias tells us that of the two marble statues called Pronaoi at the entrance of the Ismenion, that representing Athena was made by Scopas, and the other of Hermes was made by Phidias. These so-called Pronaoi were statues standing at the entrance of the building, opposite each other, a chief decorative ornament to the façade. Is it not strange that the statue on one side should be made by Phidias, and the opposite pedestal remain unoccupied until the time of Scopas, nearly a century later? Is it not plain that the temple would not have been considered finished until both statues were placed there? And is it probable that the Greeks would have allowed it to remain thus incomplete for a century? Besides, does it not seem singular, in view of the fact that Phidias was peculiarly celebrated for his statues of Athena, while Scopas was celebrated for his heroic figures and demigods, that the Athena

should have been assigned to Scopas, and the Hermes to Phidias? When we also add the fact that these statues were in marble, — a material in which, as we shall presently see, Phidias certainly worked only exceptionally, if he ever worked at all, while Scopas was a worker in marble, — it will, I think, be pretty clear that Pausanias is mistaken in attributing this statue of Hermes to Phidias.

Again, "The Golden Throne" must probably be considered as a name for the Athena of the Parthenon, since there is no golden throne of which we have any knowledge ever made by Phidias. In like manner it is most probable that the Athena mentioned by Pliny as being in Rome near the temple of Julian, and dedicated by Paulus Æmilius, was the Athena Lemnia in bronze, taken from the Acropolis. These statues, which are reckoned as four, must therefore in all probability be considered as only two.

There remains one other statue in the list which certainly must be struck out — the Horse-Tamer, still existing in Rome at the present day, under the name of "Il Colosso di Monte Cavallo." This statue, or rather group, stands on the Quirinal Hill, and on its pedestal are inscribed the words "Opus Phidiæ." It is cited by Dr. Smith in his Dictionary as a work of Phidias, and he thinks it may be the "*altrum colossicon nudum*" of which Pliny speaks. But Pliny cited this "*colossicon nudum*" in his chapter on bronze works; and as this is in marble, he could not have re-

ferred to it. Independent of all other considerations, however, there is one simple fact that makes it almost impossible that it could have been the work of Phidias, though curiously enough this simple fact has apparently escaped the observation of critics. It is, that the cuirass which supports the group is a Roman cuirass and not a Greek cuirass, such as Phidias would necessarily have made.

The legend about this group and its companion, attributed with equal absurdity to Praxiteles, is curious. In "*Roma Sacra, Antica e Moderna*," which was published in Rome in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and constantly reprinted for at least a hundred years, we are told that these two statues were made, one by Phidias, and the other by Praxiteles, in competition with each other, — that they represent Alexander taming Bucephalus, and were brought to Rome by Tiri-dates, King of Armenia, as a present to Nero, — and that they were afterwards restored and placed in the Thermæ of Constantine, from which place they were transported to the Quirinal, and again restored and set up by Sixtus V., with inscriptions, stating that they were brought by Constantine from Greece.

The inscriptions were as follows: under the horse of the statue professing to be by Phidias, was inscribed: "*Phidias, nobilis sculptor, ad artificii præstantiam declarandam Alexandri Bucephalum domantis effigiem e marmore expressit.*"

On the base was inscribed: "Signa Alexandri Magni celebrisque ejus Bucephal ex antiquitatis testimonio Phidiæ et Praxitelis emulatione hoc marmore ad vivam effigiem expressa a Fl. Constantino Max. e Græcia advecta suisque in Thermis in hoc Quirinali monte collocata, temporis vi deformata, laceraque ad ejusdem Imperatoris memoriam urbisque decorem, in pristinam formam restituta hic reponi jussit anno MDXXXIX Pont. IV." Under the horse of Praxiteles was inscribed: "Praxiteles sculptor ad Phidiæ emulationem sui monumenta ingenii relinquere cupiens ejusdem Alexandri Bucephalique signa felici contentione perficit."

Here are a charming series of assumptions, so completely in defiance of history that one cannot help smiling; and were not the fact accredited, it would be difficult to believe that these inscriptions could have been placed under these statues. Phidias died probably in B. C. 432, Praxiteles flourished about B. C. 364, nearly a century later, and Alexander was not born till B. C. 356. Here we have Phidias making a group of Alexander and Bucephalus, and representing an incident which occurred a century after his death, and in competition with Praxiteles. Absurdity and ignorance can scarcely go further; and, as we learn from "Roma Sacra," it afterwards occasioned such ridicule that Urban VIII. removed the inscriptions, and substituted the simple words, "Opus Phidiæ" and "Opus Praxitelis" under the re-

spective statues, still adhering to the legend that the two groups were the work of these great artists. The fact is that they are Roman works, and were neither brought by Tiridates from Armenia to present to Nero, nor by Constantine from Greece.

Of the statues attributed to Phidias we may then strike out eleven as resting, on the face of the facts, upon no sufficient authority. We still shall have the large number of twenty-six important statues, many of them colossal, which are far more than sufficient to have occupied his life, even when reckoned at its longest probable term. To this number it would be impossible to add the marble statues contained in the Parthenon.

Michel Angelo lived to a great age. He was throughout his life a very hard worker, devoting all his time to art. It is true that he was devoted to architecture and fresco-painting, as well as to sculpture, and that to these arts he gave much time; but still he was by profession specially a sculptor, and a large portion of his life was given to sculpture. He was, besides, impetuous and even violent in his marble work; and not content with the labor of the day, gave to it a portion of his nights, working with a candle fixed in his cap — unless, indeed, this also be a legend, into which it is better not to inquire too anxiously. Still, in the course of his long life he executed very few statues: of the really accredited statues of any size, the number, I think, does not exceed fifteen — and some of these are merely roughed

out and left unfinished. The explanation of this is undoubtedly that casting in plaster having been then just invented, and being very imperfect in its development, he was accustomed at once to rough out his large statues from small sketches in terra cotta, after the probable practice of the ancients. This obliged him personally to do with his own hand much of the hard work which now, with the increased facilities of the art and the perfecting of plaster-casting, can safely be left to an ordinary workman; at all events, there are no full-sized models existing of his great works. If, then, Michel Angelo, with twenty years more of life, and with all his energy, could produce only some fifteen statues of heroic size, — and these, many of them, unfinished, — it will not seem necessary to suppose that Phidias must have executed double that number, particularly when we remember the colossal size of many of them (from forty to sixty feet in height), the extreme elaboration and fineness of the workmanship, and the difficulties growing out of the materials in which they were executed.

We have already seen, by the testimony of Themistius, that Phidias was by no means rapid in his workmanship, but, on the contrary, slow and elaborate in his finish — just the opposite in these respects from Michel Angelo. This testimony of Themistius is borne out by all the ancient writers who speak of him. His style was a singular combination of the grand and colossal in design with

the most minute and careful finish of all details. He had a peculiar grace and refinement in his art (*χάρις τῆς τέχνης*), says Dion Chrysostomus, who in another passage distinguishes him from all his predecessors by the delicate precision of his work (*κατὰ τὴν ἀκρίβειαν τῆς ποιήσεως*) ; τὸ ἀκριβές is also attributed to him by Demetrius, in his treatise on Elocution ; and Dionysius of Halicarnassus celebrates his art as uniting these qualities of *finesse* of workmanship with grandeur of design (τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ μεγαλότεχνον καὶ ἀξιωματικόν). The minute and almost excessive elaboration of his great works, as they are described by ancient authors, perfectly supports this judgment. Take, for instance, the Zeus at Olympia, or the Athena of the Parthenon — his two greatest statues in ivory and gold. Not content with carefully finishing the main figures, he chased and ornamented them, as well as all the accessories in every part, with the minute elaboration of a goldsmith. The surface of the mantle of Zeus was wrought over with living figures and flowers. Gold and gems were inserted. Cedar, ebony, and ivory were inlaid and overlaid, and the whole was exquisitely painted. Each leg of the throne on which Zeus sat was supported by four Victories dancing, and two men were in front. The two front legs were surmounted by groups representing a Theban youth seized by a sphinx, and beneath each of these groups were Phæbus and Artemis shooting at the children of Niobe ; and still further on the legs were represented the

battle of the Amazons and the comrades of Ache-
lous. Over the back of the throne were three
Graces on one side, and three Hours on the other.
Four golden lions supported the footstool, and
along its border was worked in relief or intaglio
the battle of Theseus with the Amazons. The
sides of the throne were ornamented with nu-
merous figures representing various groups and
actions — such as Helios mounting his chariot,
Zeus and Charis, Zeus and Hera, Aphrodite and
Eros, Phœbus and Artemis, Poseidon and Amphi-
trite, Athena and Heracles, and others. What
wonderful elaboration expended on a mere acces-
sory of this Colossus!

Scarcely less remarkable for its extreme orna-
mentation was the Athena of the Parthenon. The
goddess was represented standing, dressed in a
long tunic reaching to her feet, with the ægis on
her breast, a helmet on her head, a spear in her
left hand, touching a shield which rested at her
side upon the base, and holding in her right hand
a golden Victory, six feet in height. Her own
height was twenty-six cubits, or about forty feet.
Her robes were of gold beaten out with the ham-
mer; her eyes were of colored marble or ivory, with
gems inserted. Every portion was minutely covered
with work. The crest of the helmet was a sphinx,
on either side of which were griffins. The ægis
was surrounded by golden serpents interlaced, and
in its centre was a golden or ivory head of Medusa.
The shield was embossed with reliefs, representing

on the inner side the battle of the Giants with the Gods, and on the outer side the battle of the Athenians with the Amazons. Beneath the spear was couched a dragon; and even the sandals, which were four dactyls high, were ornamented with chasings representing the battle of the Centaurs with the Lapithæ. The base, which alone occupied months of labor, was covered by reliefs representing the birth of Pandora, and the visit of the divinities to her with their gifts — the figures being some twenty in number. The interior or core of the statue was probably of wood, and over this all the nude parts were veneered with plates of ivory to imitate flesh, while the draperies and accessories were of gold plates so arranged as to be removable at pleasure.

Here is certainly work enough to employ any man a very long time in designing and executing. The Victory which Athena held in her hand was of large life-size, and might easily have occupied a year. Besides this, there are the embossed *bass-relievi* on both sides of the shield, the ægis, with the Medusa's head and golden serpents, the dragon at her feet, the sphinx and griffins on her helmet, and the *relievi* and chasings which ornamented the base and the sandals. Yet these are merely accessories. What, then, must have been the time devoted to the figure itself, to the disposition and working out of those colossal draperies, and to the perfect elaboration of the head, the arms, and the extremities!

The tendency of Phidias' mind to great elaboration and refinement of finish is shown in both of these works. Colossal as they were, august and grand in their total expression, the parts were quite as remarkable for laborious detail as the whole was for grandeur and impressiveness. He is generally considered and spoken of now solely in relation to these great works; but it must be remembered that with the ancients he was also renowned for his minute works. Julian, in his *Epistles*, tells us that he was accustomed to amuse himself with making very small images, representing for example bees, flies, cicadæ, and fishes, which were executed with infinite delicacy, and greatly admired. His skill in the toreutic art was also very remarkable; and as a chaser, engraver, and embosser, he was among the first, if not the first, of his time. He might be called, in a certain sense, the Cellini of Athens — vastly superior to the celebrated Florentine in grandeur of conception, but uniting, like him, the work of the goldsmith to that of the sculptor, and, like him, distinguished for refinement and fastidiousness of execution.

To this character and style there is nothing that responds in the fragments of the Parthenon which we now possess. The style of the figures in the pediment is broad, large, and effective, but it is decorative in its character. The parts are classed and distributed with skill, but they are often forced, in order to produce effect at a distance and in the place where they were to be seen. They

show the practiced hands of men who have been trained in a grand school, but they cannot be said to be finished with elaborate attention to details or minute study of parts. Whatever characteristics of his style they may have, they certainly want τὸ ἀκριβές, which was the distinguishing feature of the work of Phidias.

The same remarks apply to the metopes and the frieze. It is evident that all these works are of the same period; but in style, design, and execution they differ from each other, as the works of various men in the same school might be expected to differ. In grouping, composition, treatment, and character of workmanship, the metopes are of quite another class from the Panathenaic Procession of the frieze. Compared with each other, the metopes are rounder and feebler in form, tamer and more labored in treatment, and they want not only the spirit and freedom of design of the figures in the frieze, but also their flat, decisive, and squared execution. The frieze is very rich, varied, and light in composition, while the metopes are comparatively monotonous and heavy. Nor do the metopes differ more from the frieze than the figures in the pediment do from both the frieze and the metopes. While in execution the pediment sculpture is more flat and squared in style than the metopes, it differs from the frieze in the treatment of the draperies and in the proportions and character of the figures. As a design, the figures on the pediment are disconnected,

while those of the frieze are interwoven with remarkable skill. Again, not only do these three classes, as classes, differ from each other, but in each class there are very decided inequalities and diversities of style and workmanship between one part and another, — showing plainly that they have been executed by various hands, some of more and some of less skill. But the treatment of all is purely decorative, as it properly should be. All of these sculptures were subordinated to the temple which they decorated, and they were executed, not for near and minute examination, but to produce a calculated effect in the position they were to occupy. Fineness of workmanship, delicacy and refinement of detail, would have been out of place and unnecessary, and evidently were not attempted. This, however, was not the style of Phidias, who, as we have seen, even in the colossal statues of Zeus and Athena, elaborated to the utmost, with almost excessive labor, not only the figures themselves, but also the least of the accessories. It was in his nature to do this. He wished to leave the impress of all his arts upon these splendid works ; and he wrought upon them, not only as a sculptor in the large sense of the word, but as a goldsmith, as an engraver, a damascener, an embosser. Nothing was too rich, nothing too large, nothing too small for him. He enjoyed it all — the minute detail as well as the colossal mass. It was this peculiarity of his nature that led him to select, and almost to create,

the chryselephantine school of art. He had been a painter in his youth, and his eye craved color. The coldness of marble did not satisfy him and he rejected it, not only for this reason, but because as a material it did not lend itself to the art of the engraver and the goldsmith. Before his time the colossi had been of bronze or wood. He introduced and perfected the art of making them in ivory and gold; and it was as a maker of statues of divinities in these materials and in bronze that he attained the highest renown.

But abandoning the ground that these marble sculptures of the Parthenon were *executed* by Phidias, let us consider whether they were *designed* by him. Of this there is not a vestige of evidence. It is not only not stated as a fact by any ancient writer, but not even intimated in the most shadowy way, unless it be deduced from the fact stated by Plutarch, that he was general superintendent of public works, and that he had various classes of workmen under his orders. What is meant by designing these works? Is it meant that he modeled the designs? If this were the case, is it probable that no mention would be made of it by any author? We are told of other cases in which works were executed from his designs, and from the designs of other artists. We are informed that the figures in the tympana of the temple at Olympia were executed by Alcamenes and Pæonios; but nothing is said about those figures in the Parthenon. Is there any necessity to suppose these

works to have been designed by Phidias? Surely not. There were in Athens many other artists of great distinction who were fully able to design and execute them, and among them were men but little inferior to Phidias himself, who would not readily have accepted his designs, and who, by profession, were sculptors in marble — not, like Phidias, sculptors in bronze, or ivory and gold.

Among those men by whom Phidias was surrounded, and who were in these various branches of art his rivals or his peers, may be named Agoracritos, Alcamenes, Myron, Pæonios, Kolotes, Socrates, Praxias, Androstenes, Polyclitus, and Kalamis, — all sculptors in marble. Besides these there were Hegias, Nestocles, Pythagoras, Kallimachus, Kallon, Phradmon, Gorgias, Lacon, Kleoitias, and others of less note, who were more specially toreutic artists and sculptors in bronze. Here is a wonderful constellation of genius, and in it are many stars of the first magnitude. Some of these men were peers of Phidias in chryselephantine art. Some contended with him and won the prize over him. Let us take a glance at some of the most eminent.

Polyclitus studied under the great Argive sculptor Ageledas, and was a fellow-scholar with Phidias and Myron. He was the rival of Phidias in his chryselephantine works, and but little if at all inferior to him in his best works. He created the type of Hera, as Phidias did that of Athena; and his colossal statue of that goddess in ivory

and gold at Argos was admitted to be unsurpassed even by the Athena of the Parthenon. Strabo asserts that though inferior in size and nobleness to the Athena and Zeus of Phidias, it equaled them in beauty, and in its artistic execution excelled them (τῇ μὲν τέχνῃ κάλλιστα τῶν πάντων). Dionysius of Halicarnassus accords to him, as to Phidias, τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ μεγαλότεχνον καὶ ἀξιοματικόν — the character of grandeur, dignity, and harmony of parts. Xenophon places him beside Homer, Sophocles, and Zeuxis as an artist. Among his bronze works, the most celebrated were the Diadumenos and the Doryphoros, the latter of which was called the Canon, on account of its beauty and perfection of proportion. If to Phidias was accorded the highest praise as the sculptor of divinities, Polyclitus was considered his superior in his statues of men.

Nor was it only as a sculptor in bronze, gold, and ivory, that he was distinguished. He was celebrated also for his marble statues, among which may be mentioned the Apollo, Leto, and Artemis in the Temple of Artemis, and the Orthia in Argolis; as well as for his skill in the toreutic art. In this last art he excelled all others; and Pliny says of him that he developed and perfected it as Phidias had begun it — "*toreuticen sic erudit ut Phidias aperuisse.*"

Myron, his fellow-scholar, had scarcely a less reputation, though in a different way. He devoted himself to the representation of athletes, among

which the most celebrated was the Discobolos ; of animals, of which his Cow was the most famous ; and of groups of satyrs, and sea-monsters, and mythical creatures. He excelled in the representation of life, action, and expression ; and such was his skill, that Petronius says of him that he almost expressed the souls of men and animals in his bronzes.

Agoracritos and Alcamenes had a still higher distinction than Myron. The famous Aphrodite of the Gardens (*ἐν κήποις*), a marble statue by Alcamenes, enjoyed a reputation among the ancients scarcely if at all below that of the Aphrodite of Praxiteles. Pliny, writing five hundred years after, says that Phidias "*is said* to have given the finishing touches to this statue." But this is one of those common and absurd traditions that attach to the work of almost every great artist long after his death, and it may be dismissed at once. Lucian gives the statue directly and solely to Alcamenes — and to him undoubtedly it belongs. He had no need of the help of Phidias, being himself a much more accomplished worker in marble, even should we grant that Phidias ever worked at all in this material. Indeed, it was specially as a sculptor in marble that he was distinguished ; and among other works which he executed in this material were the colossal statues of Hercules and Minerva, a group of Procne and Itys, and the statue of Æsculapius. But what is the more significant in this connection is the fact, stated by

Pausanias, that it was he who executed the statues representing the Centaurs and Lapithæ at the marriage of Pirithous, which adorned the back tympanum of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, where the great Zeus of Phidias stood. Pausanias speaks of him as an artist "who lived in the age of Phidias, and was the next to him in the art of making statues."

Agoracritos is called by Pausanias "the pupil and beloved friend of Phidias," and it is most probable that he worked with him on the Athena and the Zeus. His most famous statue was the Nemesis at Rhamnus, which, as we have seen, is attributed to Phidias by Pausanias, but which clearly belongs to Agoracritos. The statue of the Mother of the Gods, which Arrian and Pausanias give to Phidias, was also made by him, according to Pliny.

Kolotes, who was also a pupil and assistant of Phidias at one time, was a sculptor in marble as well as a celebrated artist in ivory and gold. Among other works, he probably made a statue in gold and ivory of Athena at Elis, which Pausanias attributes to Phidias, but which Pliny asserts to be by Kolotes. There is no dispute that he made the statue of Asclepius in gold and ivory, which is much praised by Strabo; and he is said by Pliny to have assisted Phidias in the Zeus, and to have executed the interior of the shield of the Athena at Elis, which was painted by Panæus.

Pæonios, a Thracian by birth, was a celebrated sculptor in marble as well as bronze ; and, among other things, he executed the figures in the front tympanum of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. In character and composition these figures resemble those of the Parthenon, and they are executed in the same spirit. A fragment from the Temple of Zeus may be seen in the Louvre, standing beside a fragment of one of the metopes of the Parthenon. The fragment from the Temple of Zeus represents Heracles with the Bull. It is fuller and larger in style than the fragment from the Parthenon, which, seen beside it, looks stiff and meagre in character, and the body of the Centaur in the one is decidedly inferior to the body of the Bull in the other. This is probably a portion of the work of Pæonios.

Praxias and Androstenes, too, worked in marble in the same style, and the figures in the tympana of the Delphic temple were executed by them. The metopes also, of which five are alluded to in the Chorus of Euripides, were probably their work.

Theocosmos, too, a contemporary of Phidias, worked with him, according to Pausanias, on the Zeus at Megara, which was afterwards left unfinished, on account of the Peloponnesian war: only the head was of ivory and gold, the rest of the body being of plastic clay and wood.

But perhaps the most distinguished of all was Kalamis, who, though probably a little younger than

Phidias, was certainly a contemporary. Among other works, he executed in bronze an Apollo Alexicacos; a chariot in honor of Hiero's Victory at Olympia; a marble Apollo in the Servilian Gardens in Rome; another bronze Apollo thirty cubits high, which Lucullus carried to Rome from Apollonia; a beardless Asclepius in gold and ivory; a Nike; Zeus Ammon; Dionysos; Aphrodite; Alemena; and the famous Sosandra, so praised by Lucian. But what in this connection is peculiarly to be noticed is, that, besides being renowned for his statues of gods and mortals, he was celebrated for his skill in the representation of animals; and the excellence of his horses is specially spoken of by Ovid, Cicero, Pausanias, Propertius, and Pliny. It would therefore, in this view, seem much more probable that he may have designed the Panathenaic frieze than that it was designed by Phidias, who, as far as we know, had no particular talent for horses or animals. There is no indication, however, that either of them had anything to do with it.

It is useless to proceed further in this direction. Here were men, specially marble workers, who were amply able to execute all the marble figures of the Parthenon, without recourse to Phidias; and as there is no indication that he ever anywhere executed similar works for any temple, while at least Alcamenes and Pæonios are known to have made the works corresponding to these in the Temple of Zeus, there would seem to be far more reason to

attribute these figures to them than to Phidias, who, at the time when they were made, was too much occupied with his other work to have been able to execute them himself.

In the absence, then, of all clear indications as to the artist who made the marble sculptures of the Parthenon, it would seem more probable that they were executed by various hands, and in like manner as those of the Erechtheum, built in the 93d Olympiad, about twenty-eight years after the building of the Parthenon. Fortunately, from the discovery of certain fragments on which the accounts of the building of the Erechtheum were inscribed at the time, we are enabled to say how these reliefs were made. Portions were set off to different artists, each of whom executed his part, as described in these fragments. The names of the artists were Agathenor, Iasos, Phyromachos, Praxias, and Loclos. The inscription begins thus — I give only a fragment of it — Τὸν παῖδα τὸν τὸ δόρυ ἔχοντα [Δ] Δ. Φυρόμαχος Κηφισιεὺς τὸν νεανίσκον τὸν παρὰ τὸν θώρακα ΓΔ. Πραχσίας ἐμ Μελίτῃ οἰκῶν τὸν ἵππον καὶ τὸν ὀπισθοφανῆ τὸν παρακρούοντα ΗΔΔ; and so on. The sign ΓΔ occurs four times in the inscription. Three times the work is by Phyromachos, and belongs apparently to the same group.¹

Here we have names of artists who are unknown to us, unless the Phyromachos named here is the same who, according to Pliny, made Alcibiades in

¹ A full transcript of these inscriptions will be found in Dr. Brunn's *Geschichte der griechischen Künstler*, i. 249.

a chariot with four horses. And as for Praxias, he cannot be the well-known Praxias, since he in all probability died before the 92d Olympiad. If, then, these sculptures were intrusted to artists whose very names have not come down to us, is it not probable that the decorative sculptures of the Parthenon would have been confided to artists of the same class? In such case it would seem most natural that no mention would be made of them, more than of the artists who worked on the Erechtheum, since they were persons of no peculiar note and fame; while in the Temple of Zeus, inasmuch as artists of distinction worked, their names are given. Why tell us that Alcamenes and Pæonios made the groups in the tympana at Olympia, and omit to say anything about similar works in the Parthenon, if they were executed by Phidias or any other artist of great distinction?

Here, too, we see that different portions of the same work were assigned to different artists, each working out his subjects separately, though all working in agreement, to develop a certain story or series of stories. Such a practice would account for all sorts of varieties of design and execution, and would explain the differences to be observed between the various portions of the sculptures of the Parthenon.

A careful examination of the frieze alone shows that it must have been executed by various artists, so distinct are the different parts as well in execution as in design.

The notion commonly entertained, that Phidias was considered in his age to be vastly superior to all contemporary sculptors, will scarcely bear examination. He undoubtedly surpassed them all in his colossal chryselephantine statues of divinities; though even in this branch of art there was a difference of opinion, and one other artist at least, Polyclitus, was held, in his statue of Hera, to have stood abreast of him. Strabo declares that it excelled in beauty all the works of Phidias. But in other branches of the art the superiority of Phidias was not admitted; and he was, if report be true, repeatedly adjudged a second place in his competitions with his rivals. Alcamenes, Polyclitus, Kalamis, and Ctesilaus were his superiors in their marble statues and representations of mortals, and we hear of no work of his in marble to compete with theirs. Lucian, for instance, in his *Dialogue on Statues*, praises equally the Venus of Praxiteles, the Sosandra of Kalamis, the Aphrodite of the Gardens by Alcamenes, and the Athena Lemnia and Amazon of Phidias; and out of the special beauties of each he reconstructs an ideal image of the most beautiful woman. From the Cnidian Aphrodite of Praxiteles he takes the head, having no need of the rest of the body (he says), as the figure is not to be nude; and from this head he selects the outlines of the hair, or rather the outline of the forehead where it joins the hair, the forehead, the delicately penciled eyebrows, and the liquid and radiant charm of the eyes. From

the Aphrodite of Alcamenes he takes the cheeks and the lower part of the face, and especially the base of the hands, the beautifully proportioned wrists, and the flexile taper fingers. From Phidias he takes the total contour of the face, the softness of the jaw, and the symmetrical nose of the Athena, and the lips and the neck of the Amazon. From the Sosandra of Kalamis he takes her modest grace and her delicate subtle smile, her chastely arranged dress and her easy bearing. Her age and stature, he says, shall be that of the Cnidian Aphrodite, for this is most beautiful in Praxiteles. For her other qualities he draws upon the painters. This opinion of Lucian is particularly interesting and valuable, from the fact that he had studied and practiced the art of sculpture under his uncle, who was a sculptor, and his judgment is therefore of far more value than that of an ordinary connoisseur.

Pliny also relates a story which has a bearing in this connection, of a competition between various celebrated artists, who were contemporaries at this period. The subject was an Amazon. The artists themselves were to be the judges; and it was agreed that the statue should be held to be best which each artist ranked second to his own. The result was that the first prize was adjudged to Polyclitus, the second to Phidias, the third to Ctesilaus, the fourth to Cydon, and the fifth to Phradmon. We may reject the story as a fact, but its very existence proves that the fame of

Phidias, great as it was, did not so entirely eclipse that of other artists of his time as we generally suppose. Who of us now would think that Phradmon and Cydon, for example, stood on a level to contend with him, with any chance of other than a disastrous defeat? But it is plain that the ancients did not think so, or this story would not have been invented.

We now come to the question whether Phidias ever worked at all in marble. His renown undoubtedly rested upon his magnificent statues in ivory and gold, and especially upon his Zeus and Athena of the Parthenon, which towered above all his other works. So wonderful was the Zeus, that it was said to have strengthened religion in Greece; and the Athena of the Parthenon was held to be the glory of Athens. The poets and writers celebrate Phidias always as specially the creator of these great chryselephantine works; and though they praise the beauty of his bronze works, and especially of the Athena Lemnia, it is plain that these held a secondary place in public estimation, or at all events did not stand alone and apart as the others did. Thus Propertius says, characterizing the sculptors: —

“Phidiacus signo se Juppiter ornat eburno;
Praxitelem propria vindicat arte Lapis;
Gloria Lysippi est animosa effingere signa;
Exactis Calamis se mihi jactat equis.”

So Quintilian says of him: “Phidias tamen diis quam hominibus efficiendis melior artifex traditur

—in ebores vero longe citra æmulum, vel si nihil nisi Minervam Athenis aut Olympium in Elide Jovem fecisset” (lib. xii. ch. 10). But no writer anywhere near this period — even within five centuries of it — ever mentions a marble figure by Phidias, or celebrates him in any way as a sculptor in this material.

In the evidence given before a committee of the House of Commons upon the Elgin collection of marbles, previous to the purchase of them by the nation, Richard Payne Knight and William Wilkins gave it as their opinion that these works were not by Phidias, and that he was not a worker in marble. This statement has been rejected by the author of the work on the Elgin and Phigaleian Marbles, in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, as entirely without foundation. In this conclusion it must be admitted that he follows the opinion generally entertained at the present day, and repeated by nearly every modern writer. Visconti, to whom he refers as refuting satisfactorily the notion of Knight and Wilkins, thus argues the question: “If it were imagined that Phidias devoted himself to the toreutic art, and that he employed in his works only ivory and metals, this opinion would be confuted by Aristotle, who distinguishes this great artist by the appellation of *σοφὸς λιθοργός* — a skillful sculptor in marble — in opposition to Polyclitus, whom he styles simply a statuary, *ἀνδριαντοποιός*, since the latter scarcely ever employed his talents except in bronze. In

fact, several marble statues of Phidias were known to Pliny, who might even have seen some of them at Rome, since they had been removed to this city; and the most famous work of Alcamenes, the Venus of the Gardens, had only, as it was said, acquired so high a degree of perfection because Phidias, his master, had himself taken pleasure in finishing with his own hand his beautiful statue in marble."

An examination into these statements will show, not only that not one of them is well founded, but that the authorities on which they profess to stand will not at all sustain them. Visconti's mind is in a nebulous state as to the whole question, and he confounds things which have no relation to each other. The first mistake he makes is in confusing the toreutic art with the art of making statues in ivory and gold. I am aware that M. Quatremere de Quincy, in his treatise on chryselephantine statues, constantly uses these two terms as equivalent; but in so doing he is admitted by all persons who have critically studied the matter to be entirely incorrect. The toreutic art was the art of the engraver, the chaser, the damascener, the embosser. It might be employed, and undoubtedly was employed, by Phidias in decorating part of his statue, as it might be applied to a bronze statue, or to any metal surface or slab; but it was not the art of making statues in any material. Visconti's next proposition is, that by the term *σοφὸς λιθουργός* Aristotle meant to indicate a worker in marble as dis-

tinguished from an ἀνδριαντοποιός, who was a statuary in bronze, and to show that Phidias worked in marble, while Polyclitus worked only or chiefly in bronze. Neither of these statements can be supported; and it is impossible that Aristotle could have meant to make them. In the first place, λιθουργός does not mean a worker in marble; λιθουργική and λιθοτριβική were specially the art of cutting and polishing gems and precious stones; and a λιθουργός was a lapidary in relief or intaglio,¹ not a sculptor of marble statues. Again, ἀνδριαντοποιός does not mean a sculptor in bronze as distinguished from a sculptor in marble, but merely a maker of statues, of athletes or heroes, in any material, whether in wood, bronze, marble, gold, or ivory.

Now, when we remember that Phidias was celebrated not only for his colossal works, but also for his skill as an engraver, embosser, and damascener — in a word, for his skill in the toreutic art, which Pliny tells us was developed by him and perfected by Polyclitus, as well as for his minutely elaborated representations of flies, cicadæ, fishes, and bees — the meaning of Aristotle in applying to him the title of λιθουργός is clear. He was a λιθουργός in the exact meaning of that term, and a very skillful one. Aristotle is equally correct in applying the term ἀνδριαντοποιός, maker of athletes and heroes, to Polyclitus; for that great artist had won the highest fame of his age for statues of

¹ See Lysias's Frag., Περὶ τοῦ τύπου; also, Müller's *Ancient Art*, 360, and King's *Antique Gems*.

this kind, and established the laws of proportion in his Diadumenos and Doryphoros. If, however, as Visconti imagines, Aristotle meant to indicate that Phidias was a worker in marble, while Polyclitus was not, he is clearly wrong; for we know that Polyclitus executed various and celebrated statues in marble, whereas, as we shall see, we have no clear proof that Phidias ever did. Still further, if Aristotle intended to distinguish Phidias from Polyclitus by saying that the one was a skillful λιθουργός, and the other was not, he is again quite wrong, whether he meant by that term to indicate a toreutic artist or, as Visconti thinks, a marble worker; for Polyclitus was even more skilled than Phidias in both these arts. Again, if he meant to distinguish the one artist from the other as a maker of ἀγάλματα, or statues of divinities, he is wrong; for the chryselephantine Hera of Polyclitus rivaled the Athena of Phidias. The plain fact is that Aristotle did not mean to distinguish one of these great artists from the other in any such way. He is perfectly right in the terms he applies to each; but he did not say, nor could he have intended to say, that one was a σοφὸς λιθουργός or an ἀνδριαντοποιός, and the other was not — since, as we know, both of them were λιθουργοί and ἀνδριαντοποιοί, and he must have known it.

Stress has also been laid by some writers on the fact that Phidias is called a γλυφεύς by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and that Tzetzes speaks of him

as ἀνδριάντας χαλκουργῶν καὶ γλύφων τε καὶ ξέων, and that Hesychius uses the phrase Φειδίαι λιθοξόοι. These phrases, even were they inconsistent with the view here taken, would be of very little consequence if standing by themselves, as the earliest of these writers flourished some six hundred years, and the latest some nine hundred years, after Phidias; but taken in connection with the words of Aristotle, they may perhaps have some little weight. What is a γλυφεύς, then? Why, simply an engraver and a chiseler. And what does Tzetzes mean by ἀνδριάντας χαλκουργῶν καὶ γλύφων τε καὶ ξέων? Why, that Phidias made statues of heroes and athletes in brass, and that he was a chiseler and engraver. The words γλυφή and γλαφή in Greek, and *sculptura* and *sculptura* in Latin, though originally they signified generically cutting figures out of every solid material, were afterwards specifically applied to intagli and camei, and are the art of the cœlator, or τορευτής, or more properly, perhaps, restricted to the cutting and engraving of precious stones.

The next statement of Visconti is that several marble statues by Phidias were known to Pliny, and that the Aphrodite of Alcamenes acquired its perfection because Phidias himself finished it. As to the latter branch of this statement nothing more need be said. It is evidently one of those idle traditions which are not worth considering. But let us see what Pliny actually says. In his account of Phidias he does not even pretend to

state, as an accredited fact, that Phidias ever worked in marble. In the chapter devoted to sculptors in marble he says, "*It is said, that even Phidias worked in marble*" (et ipsum Phidiam *tradunt* scalpsisse marmora) "and that there is a Venus by him at Rome, in the buildings of Octavia, of extraordinary beauty; but *what is certain is*" (quod certum est) "that he was the master of Alcamenes, many of whose works are on the sacred temples, and whose celebrated Venus, called ἐν κήποις, is outside the walls. Phidias is *said*" (dicitur) "to have put the finishing touches to this." Pliny, therefore, by no means asserts that Phidias ever executed anything in marble; he merely says that there is a rumor or tradition to that effect; but he absolutely states as an established fact that Alcamenes was his pupil, and executed the beautiful statue of Aphrodite; and he then goes on to say, as another tradition, that Phidias assisted him in finishing it. Here he clearly distinguishes between fact and tradition, and his language shows that he placed no reliance on the latter. He does not even pretend to have seen the statue of Venus, supposed to be by Phidias, in the buildings of Octavia; and it is evident, from the turn of his sentence, that, gossiping and credulous as he generally was, he gave no credence to this rumor.

The whole argument of Visconti thus falls to the ground with the facts by which he attempts to support it.

There remain for us to consider the marble statues ascribed to Phidias by Pausanias, which are as follows: 1st, The Nemesis at Rhamnus; 2d, The Hermes at the entrance of the Ismenium at Thebes; 3d, The Aphrodite Urania at Athens, near the Ceramicus.

We have already seen that the Nemesis at Rhamnus was not the work of Phidias, but of Agoracritos; that Pausanias disagrees with other authorities in attributing it to Phidias; and that the name of Agoracritos was inscribed upon it as its author. This, therefore, must be rejected.

In the next place, as to the marble Hermes at the entrance to the Ismenium. This statue, as we have seen, was a decorative entrance statue standing before the temple; and its pendant, Athena, according to Pausanias, was the work of Scopas, who died a century later. The one pedestal could scarcely be left unoccupied for a century, yet this must have been the case if Pausanias is right; and for reasons which have already been given, this statue is, to say the least, not without very grave doubts. No other author speaks of it, and it rests solely on the authority of Pausanias, who lived more than six centuries after Phidias.

There remains, then, the Aphrodite Urania. Pausanias is the sole authority for considering this statue the work of Phidias; and as, being in marble, it would be the only one ascribed to him upon which there are not either the gravest doubts as to his authorship or the clearest indications that

he was not the author, we should accept it with caution. Can we trust Pausanias? He certainly does not agree with other writers as to the authorship of various statues. The statue of Athena at Elis, attributed by him to Phidias, Pliny says is by Kolotes. The Mother of the Gods, said by him to be a work of Phidias, is, according to Pliny, the work of Agoracritos. The *Æsculapius* at Epidaurus, given by him to Thrasy medes, is given by Athenagoras to Phidias. In respect of the Nemesis, he is clearly mistaken. Pausanias wrote long after Pliny, when facts were still more obscured by time. Tradition changes names, transmutes facts, and tends always to give great names to nameless works. He was a traveler in Greece in the age of Marcus Aurelius, when the arts, even in Rome, were in their decline; and he only reports what he sees and hears. He does not pretend to be a critic or a connoisseur in art. He was not one; and his accounts of the great statues in Greece are singularly dry and meagre. He would naturally be told who was the author of this, that, and the other statue that he saw; and he seems to have taken common report without a question, just as a traveler in Rome without particular knowledge or interest in art would accept the authorship of the Colossi in the Quirinal, and without hesitation follow the tradition and ascribe them in his book to Phidias and Praxiteles. If he were always accurate in these matters, or if he had ever shown any critical doubts about the au-

thorship of any work, a statement by him on such a subject would be entitled to more consideration; but as it is, in view of the facts that no other author before him has ascribed the Aphrodite Urania to Phidias, and that if it be by him it is his only marble work of which we have any clear testimony, little faith can be placed in the statement by Pausanias. Add to this that no contemporary of Phidias, and no writer anywhere near his age, has ever spoken of any marble work of his, and I think we must reject this statue as we have rejected the others.

In estimating the value of any such statements as to the authorship of statues, we must keep in mind the fact that it was not only not the custom for the ancient Greek sculptors to inscribe their names on their own statues, but it was not ordinarily permitted to them to do so on any public work; and undoubtedly it was for this reason that Phidias himself made his own likeness as well as the portrait of Pericles on the shield of the Athena, to indicate that the work was done by him while Pericles had the administration of affairs at Athens. In the same way Batrachus and Saurus, two Lacedæmonian artists who built the temples inclosed in the Portico of Octavia, being prohibited from inscribing their names on the walls, adopted the device of sculpturing on the spirals of the columns a lizard and a frog, which their names signified, — thus punning in marble, to perpetuate their names as architects of the temples. So

also Myron is said to have inscribed his name on the thigh of his Discobolos in such minute characters as to be visible only on the closest inspection. In the case of some of the great statues, the names of the authors were exceptionally allowed to be inscribed after their deaths; and this was probably the case with the Zeus of Phidias. Ordinarily no such practice was permitted. Such being the case, the authorship of Greek statues at the time of Pausanias would rest entirely upon tradition — and tradition is little to be trusted.

Besides, what adds to the difficulty is that it was the custom in later times to put the names of ancient sculptors on works not made by them, to give them a higher value; it is of this practice that Phædrus speaks in one of his Fables:—

“ *Æsopi nomen sicubi interposuero
Cui reddidi jampridem quidquid debui
Auctoritatis esse scito gratia;
Ut quidem artifices nostro faciunt sæculo
Qui pretium operibus majus inveniunt, novo
Si marmore adscripsere Praxitelem suo
Trito Myronem argento.*”

Of the statues which now exist, there are only some thirty on which names are inscribed, and these are certainly for the most part, if not entirely, apocryphal. The name of Phidias, together with that of Ammonius, for instance, appears on a monkey in basalt in the Capitol at Rome; that of Praxiteles on a draped figure in the Louvre; and that of Lysippus on a marble Hercules in the Pitti Gallery at Florence — not one of which is of the

least value as a work of art. So, on the torso of the Belvidere is the name of Apollonius; on the Farnese Hercules that of Glycon; on the Gladiator of the Louvre that of Agasias the Ephesian, son of Dositheos — though these names are not mentioned by any writers of antiquity. No authority can be granted to these inscriptions, and possibly the very fact that these names are on the statues is an indication that they are copies; all have *ἐποίει*. D'Hancarville and Dallaway make a distinction between *ἐποίει* and *ἐποίησεν*, — the former, according to them, signifying a copy, and the latter an original work. On the Nemesis at Rhamnus was the inscription, ΑΓΟΡΑΚΡΙΤΟΣ ΠΑΡΙΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΗΣΕΝ; and this would seem to confirm their notion. On the Zeus of Phidias, also, was the inscription, ΦΕΙΔΙΑΣ ΧΑΡΜΙΔΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ Μ' ΕΠΟΙΗΣΕΝ.

I do not recall, however, a single statue which has come down to us on which the word *ἐποίησεν* occurs, except an interesting and coarsely executed relief in the British Museum, representing the deification of Homer. Where there is any inscription it is *ἐποίει*; but it is an exceedingly rare exception that any ancient statue has a name inscribed on it. Almost all, if not all, the statues having names of the artists are of a late date, and probably most of them as late as the time of Hadrian. It was he who revived the art of sculpture; and during his reign a great number of copies, more or less good, were made of the famous statues

of antiquity; but unfortunately there has not come down to us a single accredited statue by any of the great sculptors of antiquity.

There are only two other authorities, so far as I am aware, who mention or make any allusion to marble work by Phidias; these must be considered. Seneca, nearly five hundred years after the death of Phidias, says of him, "Not only did Phidias know how to make a statue in ivory, but he also made them in bronze." Thus far he speaks absolutely; he then continues hypothetically, "If you had given him marble, or even a viler material, he would have made the best thing out of it that could be made."¹ This is considered by the author of the work on the Elgin and Phigaleian Marbles an important statement in confirmation of Pliny. In reality it contains nothing but a simple hypothetical expression of belief that if you had given Phidias a piece of marble he would have made something excellent out of it. Does any one doubt this? Seneca states as a fact only that Phidias really *did* work in ivory and bronze; and it is plain that he knew no work of Phidias in marble, or he never would have expressed a purely hypothetical opinion on such a matter.

The other authority which has been evoked in favor of the theory that Phidias worked in marble is that of Valerius Maximus, who states that there

¹ "Non ex ebore tantum sciebat Phidias facere simulacrum, faciebat et ex ære. Si marmor illi, si adhuc villiorem materiam obtulisses, fecisset quale ex illa fieri optimum potuisset." — Seneca, *Epist.* 86.

existed a tradition that he desired to execute the Athena of the Parthenon in marble, but that the Athenians would not permit him to do so: “*Idem Phidiam tulerunt quamdiu is marmore potius quam ebore Minervam fieri debere dicebat, quod diutius nitor esset mansurus; sed ut adjecit et vilius tacere jusserunt.*” (Lib. i. c. i., Externa 7.)

There is no authority for this tradition. It comes up five hundred years after the death of Phidias, and is manifestly absurd. Phidias had identified himself and his fame with his great chryselephantine and bronze works. He knew too well his own power, and his mastery over these arts, to wish to make the Athena in any other material than that in which it was made. But suppose he did so advise the Athenians, his advice was not accepted. The statue was not made of marble. Perhaps also he proposed to them to give it to Alcamenes, Agoracritos, or Polyclitus. What sort of value can be given to a statement like this appearing suddenly and solely in one writer five hundred years after the Athena was made? If we are to accept such traditions as this, we may as well “gape and swallow” any *gobemouche*. Let us have at once a life of Shakespeare written in Leipzig, or any other foreign country at least as far away as that.

This is all the testimony we have as to any work by Phidias in marble. Has it any real weight? But grant all these statements, vague and visionary as they are, to their fullest extent, what do they

prove? Not that Phidias was especially a marble-worker, but only that he made, exceptionally, one or two statues in marble, and was supposed by some writers five hundred years after his death, to have had a connection with two more, though other testimony, and the facts and dates, clearly show that he could not have made them, or at least throw the very gravest doubts upon his having done so. In this way, we might assert that Raffaele was a sculptor, because he is supposed to have made, or helped to make, the statue of Jonah in the Santa Maria del Popolo at Rome. But to jump from such shaky facts to the statement and belief that Phidias was the author, or at all events the designer, of all the marble figures in the pediment, theme topes, and the frieze of the Parthenon, is truly "a long cry." Where is the ground on which such a belief can be founded? There is not a statement or even an allusion by any ancient writer to justify it. The testimony of Plutarch, so far as it goes, is directly opposed to it, and all the known facts are in contradiction of it.

Plutarch says that Phidias was appointed general superintendent of public works; that he made the statue of Athena in the Parthenon; and that, through the friendship of Pericles, he had the direction of everything, and all the artists received his orders. But he contradicts this immediately, if he is understood to mean anything more than that Phidias generally ordered who should be employed to do this or that work; for he distinctly says that Icti-

mus and Callierates made the Parthenon, — and we know that Ictinus and Carpion wrote a book upon it. If Phidias designed or executed anything else than the Athena, why does not Plutarch say so, when he takes pains to tell us he made the Athena? The mention of the one excludes the other. If Ictinus and Callierates made the building, why may they not have made all the rest of the work? Were they not able to do it? There is no reason to doubt their ability to design and execute all the decorative figures belonging to the temple they built. To Ictinus was intrusted the building of the Temple of Apollo at Phigaleia, in the sculptures of which there is shown remarkable ability; and he also built the Temple of the Eleusinian Ceres, and its mystic inclosure or Secos. If Ictinus and Callierates, or Carpion, did not execute these marbles of the Parthenon, why may they not have intrusted them to some of the numerous artists with whom Athens swarmed at that time? Libon the architect built the temple of Zeus in which the Zeus of Phidias stood, and its pediment figures were sculptured by Alcámenes and Pæonios. Is there any reason to reject such a theory? However, as to this we are entirely in the dark; all our suppositions are purely speculative. Nothing seems clear, except that the figures were not made by Phidias.

Why did not Plutarch tell us who were the sculptors of the marbles in the Parthenon? Probably for the very simple reason that he did not

know. He wrote many centuries after Phidias was dead (about B. C. 66), and tradition may not have brought down the names of any who were concerned in the building of the Parthenon, save those of the architects and of Phidias. He did not attempt to supply the hiatus — being, to use his own words, convinced “of the difficulty of arriving at any truth in history : since if the writers live after the events they relate, they can but be imperfectly informed of facts ; and if they describe the persons and transactions of their own times, they are tempted by envy and hatred, or by interest and friendship, to vitiate and pervert the truth.”

THE ART OF CASTING IN PLASTER AMONG THE ANCIENT GREEKS AND ROMANS.

I.

THE question whether the art of making moulds and casts in plaster was known to the ancient Greeks and Romans was discussed some years ago by Mr. Charles C. Perkins, in an interesting pamphlet entitled "*Du Moulage en Plâtre chez les Anciens*,"¹ in which he collected various passages from ancient writers bearing more or less on this subject, and endeavored by their authority to establish the fact that this process was known and practiced at a comparatively early period in the history of art. After a careful examination of all his citations and arguments, as well as other authorities which he does not cite, we feel compelled to dissent entirely from his conclusions. We do not think he has made out his case. The question is an interesting one, however, from an archæological point of view at least, and well deserves consideration.

The only passage among the writings of the

¹ *Du Moulage en Plâtre chez les Anciens*, par M. Charles C. Perkins, correspondant de l'Académie des Beaux Arts, etc. Paris, 1869.

ancients which at first sight would seem directly to affirm that the process of casting in plaster from life, from clay models, or from statues in the round, in the modern meaning of that phrase, was known to the Greeks and Romans occurs in the “Natural History” of Pliny, and is as follows:—

“Hominis autem imaginem gypso e facie ipsa primus omnium expressit, ceraque in eam formam gypsi infusa emendare instituit Lysistratus Sicyonis, frater Lysippi, de quo diximus. Hic et similitudinem reddere instituit, ante eum quam pulcherrimum facere studebant. Idem et de signis effigiem exprimere invenit, crevitque res in tantum, ut nulla signa statnæve sine argilla fierent. Quo apparet antiquiorem hanc fuisse scientiam quam fundendi æris. Plastæ laudatissimi fuere Damophilus et Gorgasus idemque pictores qui Cereris ædem Romæ ad Circum Maximum utroque genere artis suæ excoluerunt.”¹

Mr. Perkins, following in substance other translators, thus freely translates and develops this passage:—

“Lysistrate de Sicyone fut le premier à prendre en plâtre des moules de la figure humaine. Dans ces moules il coulait de la cire, puis il corrigeait ces masques de cire d’après la nature. De la sorte, il atteignit la ressemblance, tandis qu’avant lui on ne s’appliquait qu’à faire de belles têtes. Lysistrate imagina aussi de reproduire l’image des statues, procédé qui obtint une telle vogue, que depuis lors ni figure ni statue ne fut faite sans argile, et l’on soit en conclure que ce procédé est antérieur à la fonte du bronze.”

¹ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, lib. xxxv. ch. xii.

If this translation be correct, there seems to be no doubt either that Pliny was mistaken, or that the ancients knew and practiced the modern art of casting in plaster.

Is, then, this translation correct? It seems to us to be an utter misapprehension of the whole meaning of the passage. Pliny says nothing about moulding or casting, and thus to translate and amplify the words he does use is to assume the very facts in question. What he really says is literally as follows : —

“ Lysistratus of Sicyon, brother of Lysippus, of whom we have spoken, first of all expressed the image of a man in gypsum from the whole person [that is, made full-length portraits], and improved it with wax [or color, for, as we shall see, *cera* means both] spread over the form. He first began to make likenesses, whereas before him the study was to make persons as beautiful as possible. He also invented expressing effigies from statues; and this practice so grew that no statues or signa [which were full-length figures either painted, modeled, cast in bronze, or executed in marble] were made without white clay. From which it would seem that this science [or process] was older than that of casting in bronze. The most famous modelers were Damophilus and Gorgasus, who were also painters, and who decorated the temple of Ceres at Rome with both branches of their art.”

The first sentence, thus literally rendered, it will be perceived, has in many respects the same ambiguity in English as in Latin. The words

“image,” “expression,” and “form” have all a double signification, and the question is what is their true meaning in this connection.

If it can be shown that this passage neither describes nor proposes to describe the process of casting in plaster, as we understand that phrase, the keystone of the whole argument that it was known to the ancients falls out. No other writer directly asserts that such a knowledge or practice existed, and all allusions to this matter contained in any ancient author are purely collateral, and have no force in themselves. Further, some well-known facts which we shall have occasion to bring forward later are entirely opposed to the probability of such a knowledge and practice.

It is upon this passage in Pliny, then, that the whole case depends. Now, in a doubtful and obscure question like this, dependent upon the statement of any single author, we have a right to claim three things: first, that the statement should be clear and fairly susceptible of only one explanation; second, that it should not be contradicted by a subsequent statement immediately following; third, that the author himself should be trustworthy.

And in the first place, as to the author. The “Natural History” of Pliny is certainly a most interesting, amusing, and in many respects valuable book, but quite as certainly it is one of the most inaccurate that ever was written, abounding in half-knowledge, second-hand information, legen-

dary statements, and rubbish of every kind. It is, in a word, the commonplace book of an agreeable, gossiping man, of a wide reading, who took little pains to be accurate, who reported everything he heard with slight examination, who was exceedingly credulous, and who accepted as truth and fact the most ridiculous stories. All is fish that comes to his net. In his chapters relating to artists and art he is singularly devoid of judgment or accurate knowledge; he constantly confuses things which have no relation to each other, often contradicts himself, and becomes at times utterly unintelligible. Yet we are forced to turn to Pliny, to give a weight and authority to his words upon art, and to own a deep debt of gratitude to him, not because he is trustworthy, but simply because he alone of all the ancient authors, with the exception of Pausanias, has given us a detailed account of the statues and artists of antiquity. His account of the ancient artists and their works is the fullest we have, and adrift as we often are on a wide sea of conjecture, we are glad to seize upon any straws and fragments, "*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*" of blankness and doubt; seizing here a bit from Pausanias, Herodotus, or Lucian, there a waif from Cicero, or a floating fragment from one of the great tragic poets, and glad enough to get upon any such raft as that which Pliny gives us, however leaky and rickety. But seaworthy or trustworthy in emergencies Pliny certainly is not.

In the next place, as to the passage under discussion. So far from its being clear and distinct, its obscurity, confusion, and apparent contradiction are so great as to have baffled every effort to explain it satisfactorily; and Dr. Brunn, one of the most accomplished of archæologists, in his history of Greek art, finding it impossible to reconcile the different sentences, does not hesitate to treat a portion as an interpolation, or at least out of place where it appears.

Two views are to be taken of the process described by Pliny: first, that by the term “cera” he means wax; and second, that he means color. Taking the first view, let us now consider the passage in question, sentence by sentence, and endeavor to unravel its real meaning. Lysistratus, first of all, made likenesses of men in gypsum from their whole figure (that is, whole-length portraits), and improved them with wax (or color) spread over the form (core or model) of gypsum. “*Imaginem gypso e facie ipsa expressit*” are the words of Pliny which Mr. Perkins in common with other translators supposes to mean “made moulds in plaster from the face,” — “prendre en plâtre des moules.” But this simple phrase cannot be twisted into such a meaning. “*Exprimere*,” according to Forcellinus, is “*effingere, rappresentare, assomigliare, ritrarre dal vivo*.” “*Exprimere*” alone would be, therefore, according to this last definition, to make a portrait from life. The additional words, “*imaginem e facie ipsa*,” make

this meaning still stronger. “*Imaginem*” means a full-length figure or likeness, and not a mould, as would be required by Mr. Perkins’s translation. “*Exprimere imaginem*” cannot be forced to mean “made a mould,” whether in gypsum or in any other material. Suppose we translate the words literally, “to express an image in plaster,” and interpret “image” to mean mould, it is plain that the phrase is wrong; it should be *impress* and not *express*. You cannot express a mould. It is impressed on the face. In like manner when Plautus says “*expressa imago in cera*,” or “*expressa simulacra ex auro*,” he means making a portrait in color or in gold. Again, “*facies*” does not mean face, but the total outward shape, appearance, or figure of a man. “*Vultus*” is the proper term for face, and is so used by Pliny himself; as when he speaks, for instance, of the portraits of the head of Epicurus as “*vultus Epicuri*,” and distinguishes them from the full-length figures of athletes, “*imagines athletarum*,” with which the ancients adorned their palæstra and anointing-rooms. In fact, the whole chapter in which this passage occurs relates to portraits, and is entitled “*honos imaginum*.” If there could be any question on this point, it would be settled by a passage in Aulus Gellius (13, 29), in which he defines “*facies*” as the build of the whole body, — “*facies est factura quædam totius corporis* ;” and Cicero, in his treatise “*De Legibus*” (1, 9), says, “That which is called ‘*vultus*’ exists in no living

being except man," — "Is qui appellatur vultus nullo in animante esse præter hominem potest." ¹ So Virgil in "vivos ducent de marmore vultus" means the face. "Imago," on the contrary, and "facies" mean the whole figure; only "facies" means the real figure, and "imago" the imitation of it. Pliny himself invariably uses them so, and in one of his letters (ep. 7, 33, 2) he recommends that we should be careful to select the best artist to make a full-length likeness, — "Esse nobis curæ solet ut facies nostra ab optimo quoque artifice exprimatur." By the word "exprimatur" he certainly does not refer to casting. So mechanical an operation as this surely does not require the best of artists. "Imaginem e facie ipsa" means therefore a full-length likeness.

Again, "infundere" does not necessarily mean pour in, but is quite as often used in the sense of poured over or spread on; as where Ovid says, "infundere ceram tabellis;" or where Virgil says, "campi fusi in omnem partem," or "sole infuso terris;" or again where Ovid uses the phrases "collo infusa mariti" or "nudos humeris infusa capillos," it can only mean spread over. Wax cannot be poured into a flat surface like a tablet, or hair poured into shoulders.

Mr. Perkins, with Forcellinus before his eyes, after citing his definitions of "exprimere" says:

¹ So also Fronto in his *De differentiis Vocabulorum*, published by Cardinal Mai from palimpsests, says: "Vultus proprie hominis — os omnium — facies plurium."

“Explications qui toutes rentrent dans l'idée de représenter, de reproduire, de prendre sur le vif, comme on dit en français, et par conséquent dans l'idée du moulage.” But “*ritrarre dal vivo*” means nothing more than to make a portrait from life, whatever “prendre sur le vif” may mean; nor can any one of Forcellinus’s definitions be tortured into an allusion to casting. “Mais,” he continues, “cette idée surtout est accusée dans Tacite, qui dit en parlant d’un vêtement que dessinait les formes, un vêtement collant ‘*vestis artus exprimens*.’” But surely this phrase means simply a garment expressing, or as we should say showing, the limbs, and has nothing more to do with “casting” than “dessinait les formes” has to do with drawing, or a “vêtement collant” has to do with glue. He also thinks another phrase used by Pliny — “*expressi cera vultus*” — has a similar significance. If all our metaphors are to be subjected to this strict test, we must be very careful how we speak. Yet these and similar examples, which he says he could multiply, “peuvent suffire,” he thinks, “pour nous autoriser à croire que Pline a voulu dire que Lysistrate était l’inventeur de la reproduction des statues par le plâtre, en d’autres termes qu’il était le premier qui avait eu l'idée de se servir du gypse pour mouler.” This, to say the least, is going very far. With such philologic views, what would he think of this phrase, “*vera paterni oris effigies*,” or “*vivos ducent de marmore vultus*,” or “*infans omnibus membris expressa*”? Or, to take an English line, what would he make of —

“The express form and image of the King”?

But if Pliny meant casting, why did he not use the appropriate Latin word for that process — “fundere”? In the subsequent sentence, speaking of casting in brass, he says “fundendi æris.” “Fundere” meant to cast, not “exprimere.”

Besides, let us look at the practical difficulty in this process. After the moulds were made and the wax cast into them, as Mr. Perkins interprets Pliny to mean, we have still only wax impressions, and not plaster castings. And how were they got out of the mould after they were cast? We, in modern times, have learned no method of doing this; we should be obliged first to make the mould in plaster, then to make a cast in plaster in that mould, then on that cast to make a piece-mould with sections to take apart, — an elaborate process; and then we could get a wax cast, but not before. The fact that the cast mentioned by Pliny (supposing he means a cast) is in wax not only involves quadruple labor and skill on the part of the caster, but makes the process impossible, or next to impossible, if it were simply as he is supposed to describe it. If the cast were in plaster, it would resist, so that the mould could be broken off from it in bits; but with wax this would be entirely impracticable.

Let us still further consider the phrase “ceraque in eam formam gypsi infusa emendare instituit.” What does “cera in eam formam infusa” mean? Simply to cover or spread wax (or color) over

that model ; just as Ovid says “*infundere ceram tabellis*,” to spread wax over the tablets, not to pour wax into the tablets, for that was impossible, they being flat surfaces, nor to cast them. Again, Pliny does not say that Lysistratus introduced the practice of spreading wax over a core, or of pouring wax into a form, or casting ; but only of improving the likenesses, or working them up in the wax after it was spread over the plaster : “*instituit emendare*,” he says, not “*instituit infundere*.” “*Formam*” here has not the signification of mould, but of model or image. Undoubtedly the term “*forma*” in Latin was used to signify a mould as well as a cast, or a model, or a form ; and in this respect it had the same ambiguity that the corresponding terms “*mould*” and “*form*” have in English. A “*form*” is a seat, as well as a shape and a ceremony, and “*mould*” is constantly, though improperly, used to indicate a model or the thing moulded, as well as the real mould in which it is cast ; the phrases “*to model*” and “*to mould*” are often synonymous in meaning. So “*forma*” was sometimes employed in its primary significance of figure, shape, and configuration, as when Quintilian says, “*Eadem cera aliæ atque aliæ formæ duci solent*,” — various shapes may be given to the same wax ; sometimes in the sense of image, as when Cicero speaks of “*formæ clarissimorum*,” the images of distinguished men ; sometimes to mean a model or shape over which a thing is wrought, as a shoemaker’s last, — “*Si scalpra*

et formas non sutor emat," as Horace says ; and sometimes as indicating a hollow mould in which bronze is cast, as when Pliny says, "Ex iis [sili-
cibus] formæ fiunt, in quibus æra funduntur," — from these pebbles moulds are made, in which brass is cast. But when he uses it in this last sense, it will be observed, Pliny employs the term "fundere," to cast, and not "exprimere," nor "emendare." In the passage about Lysistratus, then, "forma" would seem to mean a model, or core, like the shoemaker's last, on which the wax was spread for the purpose of emending or improving something. What is that something which Pliny tells us he improved by this means ? What can it be except the "imaginem," the likeness ? There is no other word to which "emendare" can refer. If, then, we understand the passage as meaning that Lysistratus modeled a likeness in gypsum, and then improved it or finished it in wax which he spread over the gypsum, the statement is quite intelligible, and not a word is warped from its correct significance. If we adopt the other interpretation, however, we must understand "imaginem gypso expressit" to mean that he made a mould in gypsum, contrary to the direct force of the words ; and with wax poured into that mould (making "formam" equivalent to "imaginem," and referring to it) he emended or improved — something. What ? Why, the mould, — which is absurd. Again, we cannot begin by making "imaginem" mean the cast, before the "formam"

or mould is made ; not only because the practical process is thus reversed, but because then we should have a cast in plaster made by pouring wax into the mould, which is even more absurd. Taking “forma” to have in this sentence any of its meanings except “mould,” we have no difficulty in understanding it ; taking it as “mould,” we are forced to change the primary significance of “imaginem” and “expressit,” and are involved in very serious questions.

In addition to these considerations, it must not be forgotten that this cast of gypsum, according to Mr. Perkins’s interpretation of the sentence, was made not of the face alone (“vultus”), which is by no means an easy process, but of the whole figure (“facie”), which is a very hazardous one, and to which, with all the knowledge and experience of the present day in casting, few people would be willing to submit.

A passage of Alcimus Avitus, in his poem “De Origine Mundi” (lib. 1, 6, 75), throws a clear light on the process which seems here to be described as the invention of Lysistratus : —

“Hæc ait, et fragilem dignatus tangere terram
Temperat humentem conspersa pulvere limum
Molliturque novum dives sapientia corpus
Non aliter quam opifex diuturno exercitus usu.
Flectere laxatas per cuncta sequacia ceras
Et vultus complere rudes aut corpora gypso
Fingere vel segni speciem componere massa
Sic Pater Omnipotens.”

Here we have the body modeled (“fingere” is

to model) in gypsum, and the ductile "cera" spread over all the undulations, and the rude face finished, just as Pliny describes it.

Let us now consider the next sentence, in which he says, "*Hic et similitudinem reddere instituit, ante eum quam pulcherrimum facere studebant.*" This certainly has nothing to do with casting. It is very important as throwing a reflex light on the previous sentence. The whole stress of the passage is to bring out the fact that Lysistratus made portraits. He used a peculiar process, perhaps, but his specialty was that he made portraits from life ("*imaginem hominis e facie ipsa*"), which he worked up in wax ("*emendare cera*"); and not only this, but his portraits were exact likenesses ("*similitudinem reddere instituit*"), and not merely ideal figures like those of the artists who preceded him ("*ante eum quam pulcherrimum facere studebant*").

A slight glimpse at the history of the art will clear up this matter. In the early period of sculpture, only statues of divinities were made, and up to a comparatively late time these archaic figures were copied for religious and superstitious reasons, and the old formal hieratic type was strictly observed. It was not until the 58th Olympiad that iconic statues began to be made in honor of the victors in the national games, and these for the greater part were rather portraits of the peculiarities of general physical developments than of the face. Portrait statues of distinguished men now

began to be made, but they were very few in number, and only exceptionally allowed by the state. The first iconic statues, representing Harmodius and Aristogeiton, were made in 509 B. C. by Antenor. Phidias followed (480 to 432 B. C.), and during his period the grand style was in its culmination, and for the most part divinities or demi-gods only were thought worthy subjects for a great sculptor. Iconic statues were, however, executed during this period, and among the legendary heroes and divinities who formed the subjects of the thirteen statues erected at Delphi and executed by Phidias out of the Persian spoils, the portrait of Miltiades was allowed,¹ but the erection of public portrait statues was very rarely permitted, and the introduction by Phidias of his own portrait and that of Pericles among the combatants wrought upon the shield of his ivory and gold statue of Athena occasioned a prosecution against him for impiety. It is said that Phidias, in his statue of a youth binding his hair with a fillet, made the portrait of Pantarees, an Elean who was enamored of the great sculptor, and who obtained the victory at the Olympian games in the 86th Olympiad (B. C. 435). But this story, which is given by Pausanias, rests, even by his own account, purely on tradition, and was apparently

¹ According to Æschines, in his oration against Ctesiphon, Miltiades desired that his name should be inscribed on this portrait statue, which was placed in the Pœcile; but the Athenians refused their permission.

founded upon a supposed resemblance between Pantarces and the statue. Portraiture in its true sense, however, now began, and soon after the death of Phidias, about the 90th Olympiad, Demetrius obtained celebrity as a portrait sculptor. He seems to have been the first to introduce the realistic school of portraiture, copying so carefully from life, particularly in his likenesses of old persons, that he was reproved for being too faithful to Nature. Quintilian accuses him of being “nimius in veritate” (xii. 10); Lucian in his “Philopseudes” calls him an ἀνθρωποποιός, and, describing a statue by him of Pelichus the Corinthian, says it was αὐτῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ὁμοίον, — like the very man himself. Callimachus, also, at the same period obtained the nickname of Κατατηξίτευχος, on account of the extreme detail and finish of his works. These artists flourished nearly a century before Lysistratus; and Pliny therefore is incorrect in his sweeping statement that before the time of Lysistratus sculptors had only endeavored to make their statues as beautiful as possible, and not to give accurate portraits. Still, these men must be considered as exceptions to the general practice, and it was not until the time of Alexander that portrait-sculpture in the sense of accurate likeness was developed. Up to that period it still was heroic, generalized, and ideal in its character, with comparatively little individuality or detail. The portrait statues, for instance, of the Royal Family by Leochares (372 B. C.), and that of

Mausolus (about 350 B. C.) on the famous Mausoleum erected by Artemisia, were treated in this style. Lysippus, however, during the reign of Alexander of Macedon, by his great talent gave a new impulse and development to the school of portraiture, and while retaining the heroic character he gave a more realistic truth to his works. Pliny speaks of him as distinguished for the finish of his work in the remotest details, — “*argutiæ operum custoditæ in minimis rebus.*” In his portraits of Alexander he represented even the defects of his royal patron, such as the stoop of his head sideways. Such was his skill that Alexander declared “that none but Apelles should represent him in color, and none but Lysippus in marble.” Lysistratus was the brother of Lysippus, and Pliny says that he introduced the practice of making portraits which were not merely heroic and ideal likenesses, but faithful representations of the real men. In attributing to Lysistratus the introduction of this practice of individual portraiture, Pliny undoubtedly goes beyond the real facts. He did not introduce the practice, he merely developed it by a peculiar process, giving additional verisimilitude thereby. This process was roughly modeling the likeness in plaster, and then finishing the surface and the details in the “cera” with which he covered it.

In painting, the sphere of portraiture was larger than in sculpture, and subject apparently to no such restrictions. The earliest portrait on record

by any great painter was not of hero, philosopher, or athlete, but of Elpinice, the daughter of Miltiades and the mistress of Polygnotus, who painted her portrait as Laodice, one of the daughters of Priam, in his famous picture representing the "Rape of Cassandra," in the Pœcile at Athens. This picture was executed about 463 B. C., when Elpinice must have been at least thirty-five years of age. Dionysius of Colophon was also a distinguished portrait-painter and celebrated for his excessive finish. Nicephorus Chuunnus, the grammarian, describes Apelles and Lysippus as making and painting *Zῶσας εἰκόνας καὶ πνοῆς μόνης καὶ κινήσεως ἀπολειπόμενας*, — being likenesses only wanting breath and motion. For one of his portraits of Alexander Apelles received twenty talents of gold (£5,000), which was measured, not counted, out to him. He also painted the portraits of Campaspe and Phryne in the character of Venus, taking the face from Campaspe and the nude figure from Phryne. Speaking of Apelles, Pliny himself relates in his thirty-sixth book that "he painted portraits so exact to the life that one of those persons called Metoscopi, who divine events from the features of men, was enabled, on examining his portraits, to foretell the hour of the death of the person represented." And this monstrous story Pliny apparently accepts. At all events, he does not question it. Parrhasius, "the most insolent and arrogant of artists," says Pliny, "painted a portrait of himself and dedicated it in a public

temple to Mercury; and though the Athenians had publicly proceeded against Phidias for so doing, they allowed it to Parrhasius, thus plainly showing that the dignity of sculpture was higher than that of painting."

But to return from this digression to the consideration of the passage by Pliny relating to portraiture in modeling and sculpture. In the sentence immediately following, Pliny goes on to say, "*Idem et de signis effigiem exprimere invenit, crevitque res in tantum, ut nulla signa statuæve sine argilla fierent,*" — Lysistratus also made copies from statues, and this practice came so into vogue that no statues in brass or marble were made without white clay. What the meaning of this sentence is we can only guess; as it stands, it is quite unintelligible. Perhaps he intended to say that Lysistratus set the fashion of making small copies in clay or terra cotta of all the statues that were executed. But it is quite possible that he meant nothing of the kind. It is plain that if Lysistratus had already invented casting in plaster, it would have been unnecessary to copy statues in clay, except for the purpose of reduction to statuettes. Mr. Perkins thinks he may have intended to speak of "*esquisses d'argile [maquettes] dont se servent les sculpteurs comme point de départ, esquisse reproduite plus tard en marbre et avec la mise aux points.*" But there was nothing new in this; and surely Lysistratus could not be said to have invented, or set the fashion of, a process which cer-

tainly had been employed very long before his time. And again, why make a small statue in clay and enlarge it proportionally in marble, if you can make it at once in full size and cast it? Nor does Mr. Perkins seem to be aware that in adopting this view, and translating as he does "*de signis effigiem exprimere*," — to make a small model or maquette in clay, — he abandons his explanation of the sentence referring to gypsum. For if "*effigiem argilla exprimere*" means, as he says, to make a model in clay, why does not "*imaginem gypso exprimere*" mean to make a model in plaster? Besides, the fact that Pliny applies the same terms to a process in clay as to one in plaster at once puts an end to the matter so far as the question of casting goes. Clay is not a material to cast with, in any proper sense of that term.

Another objection to this interpretation that Pliny meant a maquette, "*esquisse*," or sketch is that "*effigies*" did not mean sketch. It carried with it nearly the significance of our own word *effigy*, — of great reality of imitation. "*Imago*" was a vaguer word, and might indicate a delusive resemblance as by painting; but "*effigiem*" was ordinarily employed to designate a more absolute imitation. Thus Cicero says, "*Nos vere juris germanæ justitiæ que solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus. Umbra et imaginibus utimur.*"¹ And again, "*Consectatur nullam eminentem effigiem virtutis sed adumbratam imaginem*

¹ See *Cicero ad Atticum*, xii. 41.

gloriæ." "Effigies" would, therefore, carry no such idea as that of sketch.

Besides, not only is "effigies" not the correct word for sketch, but Pliny would scarcely have used it in this sense, when immediately afterwards, speaking of the sketches of Arcesilaus, which sold for more than the finished works of other artists, he employs the appropriate term for sketches, — "proplasma." In the translation of Pliny, published by Mr. Bohn, and made by Mr. Bostick and Mr. Riley, this term is translated "models in plaster;" but it simply means sketches or antijicta, in whatever material they were made. The words "plastæ" and "plasma" have nothing to do with plaster. "Plastæ" were simply modelers, and πλαστική was the art of modeling, — the plastic art.

Again, Pliny could scarcely have intended to say that Lysistratus invented modeling sketches of statues in clay before executing them in plaster, since he tells us explicitly that Pasiteles used to say that *plastice* was the mother of *statuaria*, *sculptura*, *et cœlatura*; and, though he was distinguished as first in all these arts, he never executed anything in them until he had first modeled it in clay, — "nihil unquam fecit, antequam finxit."

Before leaving this sentence, let us take a different view of its possible meaning. May not Pliny use the words "signa" and "signis" to mean pictures and not statues? Undoubtedly "signum"

was thus used, as where Plautus speaks of a “*signum pictum in parieti*,” — a picture painted on the wall; or where Virgil speaks of a “*pallam signis auroque rigentem*,” — a mantle stiff with embroidered figures and gold. In this sense the passage would mean that Lysistratus made effigies from pictures as well as from statues, and that thenceforward not only no statues but no pictures were made without being copied in bas-relief, or in the round, *argilla*, or white clay. This would account for the use of the word “*effigiem*,” which has a stronger significance of reality than “*imaginem*.”

The succeeding sentence is even more obscure; and, unless it be interpolated or out of its proper place, is quite unintelligible. In the connection in which it now stands it is absurd. It is as follows: “*Quo apparet antiquiorem hanc fuisse scientiam quam fundendi æris*,” — by which it seems that this knowledge or practice was older than that of casting in bronze. What is the “*scientiam*” to which he refers? He has previously spoken only of two: first, that of making portraits in plaster and wax; second, that of making copies of statues in clay, — both, as he says, invented or introduced into practice by Lysistratus. But to say that that artist could have invented any process older than that of casting in bronze is not only ridiculous in itself, but inconsistent with what he has previously told us; since at least two centuries previous to the time of Lysistratus, Rhœcus and Theodorus of Samos — as we learn from Pausanias, Herodotus,

and even Pliny himself — exercised the art of casting in bronze. Pausanias,¹ indeed, tells us that these sculptors invented this art; but Pliny, with his usual inaccuracy and carelessness, says that they invented “plastice,” or the art of modeling (“In Samo primos omnium plasticen invenisse Rhœcum et Theodorum,” ch. xxxv.), — an art which from the very nature of things must have been practiced from the earliest and rudest ages, almost from the time when the first child made the first mud-pie.

Dr. Brunn,² in commenting on this passage in Pliny, accepts the first sentence as describing the art of casting in plaster, but, finding it impossible to reconcile it with the subsequent sentences, ingeniously suggests that it was an addition inserted in the margin, and afterwards interpolated into the text by the copyists in the wrong place. Throwing out this first sentence about Lysistratus from this place, he still accepts it, and interprets it to mean that Lysistratus invented the art of casting. The subsequent sentences he connects with a previous passage in Pliny, in which he gives an account of Dibutades of Sicyon, a potter by trade, and relates the legend that this artist drew the outline of the face of a girl whom he loved from her shadow on the wall, and his father pressed clay upon it within those outlines, and made a *typum* which he baked. The passage, ac-

¹ iii. 12, § 13; viii. 14, § 5.

² *Geschichte der griechischen Künstler*, vol. i. p. 403.

cording to Dr. Brunn, then would continue: "He [Dibutades] also invented the making of effigies from signa, and this practice so increased that thenceforward no statues or signa were made without argilla; so that it appears that this art was more ancient than that of casting in bronze." By accepting this suggestion of Dr. Brunn we certainly relieve Pliny of the absurdity of stating that any "scientiam" or practice invented by Lysistratus was older than casting in bronze, since centuries before his time bronze figures of colossal proportions had been cast. But even supposing these sentences to refer to Dibutades and not to Lysistratus, they are far from being clear or accurate. Is it possible to believe that, while the making of brick and earthenware utensils and fictile vases is so ancient that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, no one before Dibutades had ever attempted to model a figure or a face in clay, or to put a model into a furnace and bake it? All history is against such a supposition. Images in terra cotta were made by the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, and Ephesians centuries before Dibutades. The ancient Etruscan terra cottas previous to his epoch were scattered, as Pliny himself says, all over the world: "*Signa Tuscanica per terras dispersa.*" The capitol was decorated with earthen statues at the time of the first Tarquin, and Pausanias mentions many clay statues of gods and demigods executed in the earliest ages of Greece itself.

Again, from this very passage it is clear that Pliny himself admits that there were *signa* and *statuæ* already existing at the time of Dibutades, of which he first made effigies. What did Dibutades invent? Certainly not the art of modeling in clay, or of baking the clay. His statement, also, that thenceforward no statues were made without clay is scarcely intelligible, unless we suppose him to mean that clay models were made thenceforward before executing statues in stone or other materials. But he does not say this. Again, he cannot mean that Dibutades first invented taking impressions from indented outlines, or *intaglii*, for this was as old as the first primitive seal, and was no more invented by Dibutades than by Lysistratus.

Dr. Brunn interprets the statement in respect to Dibutades as showing that he was probably the first inventor of casting, at the same time that he also interprets the sentences referring to Lysistratus as declaring that he first invented casting, — the only difference being that the process of the one was in clay, and that of the other in plaster.

But is it clear that Dibutades, according to Pliny, ever made even a stamp in clay from indented outlines on the wall? The passage is ordinarily so interpreted, but is this interpretation correct? Pliny says that Dibutades having traced the shadow on the wall in outline, his father impressed clay within that outline, and thus made a *typum* which he baked with other articles of earth,

and which was long afterwards preserved in the Nymphæum at Corinth. His words are, “quibus lineis pater ejus impressa argilla typum fecit.” What, then, is the meaning of “typum”? Evidently not a mould, or impression, but a relief. Had it been a mould, he could have stamped from it a hundred impressions, since it would have been merely a seal with an irregularly relieved outline; and in order to have the repetition of what was on the wall he must perforce have stamped from it an impression. This he evidently did not do, or at least nothing is said to indicate anything of the kind. He preserved and baked what he first obtained, which, if it was merely a mould, would have produced, to say the least, no effect. The true as well as the literal translation of this passage would seem to be, “within the outlines by putting on clay he made a relief.” This clay he probably modeled as well as he could, keeping within the lines, and then removed it from the wall and baked it. The same interpretation of this passage is given by Giovanni Battista Adriani, in a remarkable essay or rather letter addressed by him to Giorgio Vasari in 1567, in which he gives a summary of the most celebrated Greek artists and their works. “Typus” in Latin had the double significance of “intaglio” and “relievo,” as our word “type” has of the type itself and the printed impression; and sometimes it was used in one sense and sometimes in the other, but it was usually employed to mean a relief. Thus

Cicero, in one of his letters to Atticus (lib. i. ep. 10), writes, "*Præterea typos tibi mando quos in tectorio atrio possim includere,*" — I commission you also to procure me some reliefs to be inserted in the plaster of the anteroom. And Pliny in this passage would plainly seem to use the word in the same sense; otherwise he would probably have written "*forma,*" as he did in other cases when he meant a mould. Not that even that word would be free from all ambiguity, but it would more appropriately signify a mould.

But however ingenious is the suggestion of Dr. Brunn that the passages relating to Lysistratus ought to belong to Dibutades, the fact is that in all editions of Pliny they are connected with Lysistratus; and as this suggestion does not dispose of all difficulties and clear up the matter, we will proceed to consider them in that relation, and see if anything can be made clearly out of them.

Plainly, if the "*scientiam*" here spoken of refers to the invention of Lysistratus, and is interpreted to be the art of casting in plaster, it is ridiculously incorrect to say that it was older than casting in brass. If that invention be of modeling in plaster, it is also entirely incorrect. We know that this was practiced at least a century previous, — as, for instance, in the construction of the great statue of Zeus at Megara, the body of which was of plaster and clay, the head alone being cased in gold and ivory; and also of the Bacchus in painted plaster, of which Pausanias speaks.

The only way in which we can explain the statement that any “scientiam” or process described by Pliny as used by Lysistratus was older than the art of casting in bronze, is by supposing he meant to say that the process he employed was in itself an old one, and that it was only in the practical application to the making of portraits that there was any novelty, — the process of covering a core of plaster with wax being older than casting in bronze, while covering a sketch of plaster with wax and then working that surface up from life was new. The statement so understood would be intelligible at least, and, as far as we know, perfectly correct. The method of the ancients in casting bronze statues is not described by any ancient writer, but it is supposed to have been this: A fire-proof core was first built up of plaster, clay, earth, or other materials, and over this a thin and even coating of wax or pitch was spread; or perhaps, which is not so probable, the surface was rasped down to the thickness intended for the bronze, and afterwards covered with a thin coating of wax. In either case the result would be the same. The outside of this wax being then completely covered with sand or packed clay-dust, there would be a thin coating of wax inclosed between the two surfaces, which, melting away before the fused metal, would allow that metal to take its place. This would account for the remarkable thinness and evenness of the ancient bronzes; for by such a method the core would be perfect, and

the artist would naturally put on as little wax as possible. If we suppose the statue, after it was nearly completed in plaster or clay, not to have been rasped down but simply to have been covered with wax, we shall see that the result would be that the bronze cast would be a little fuller in size and thicker in proportions than the original model. And this is a peculiar characteristic of the ancient bronzes, especially to be observed in the limbs and joints, which are generally larger and puffier in bronze than in marble statues.

Now if Pliny meant to say of Lysistratus that his method of modeling portraits by making a plaster figure or core, and covering the surface with wax, was older than that of casting in bronze, he was quite right ; for undoubtedly the process of covering a core with wax must have preceded that of casting in bronze, or at least must have been coincident with it. But at the same time this method had previously been used only, or at least chiefly, in casting ; whereas Lysistratus was the first to use it for modeling from life and carefully finishing every part. The process was old ; the application was new.

Thus far in considering this passage we have proceeded on the hypothesis that the "*cera*" spoken of was wax. But another and quite different view is also possible, and seems in all probability to be the correct one. Pliny may mean to refer to quite a different thing, and by the term "*cera*" may have meant not wax but color.

“Ceraë” was the common term for a painter’s colors, and Pliny himself thus uses it in defining encaustic painting: “Ceris pingere et picturam inurere.” Varro also says, “Pictores locutulas magnas habent arculas ubi discolores sunt ceraë.” Statius also uses the same term when he says, “Apelleæ cuperent te scribere ceraë.” Anacreon, in his odes, constantly uses *κηρός* for picture; as, for instance, —

Ἐρωτα κήρινόν τις
Νεηνίης ἐπώλει.

Here it is not a waxen figure, but a wax, or oil, — that is, a painting of Eros, not an *ἀγάλμα*. And in the same ode the youth replies in Doric, “Οὐκ εἰμὶ κηροτέχνης,” — “I am not a painter;” or even more manifestly in the ode beginning, —

Ἄγε, ζωγράφων ἄριστε,
γράφε, ζωγράφων ἄριστε,
Ῥοδίης κοίρανε τέχνης,
ἀπεοὔσαν, ὥς ἂν εἴπω,
γράφε τὴν ἐμὴν ἐταίρην.
γράφε μοι τρίχας τὸ πρῶτον
ἀπαλάς τε καὶ μελαίνας.
ὁ δὲ κηρὸς ἂν δύνηται,
γράφε καὶ μύρου πνεούσας.

And again, —

ἀπέχει· Βλέπω γὰρ αὐτήν.
τάχα, κηρὲ, καὶ λαλήσεις.

Wax was the common medium used by painters. After it had been purified and blanched, their colors were mixed with it just as ours are with oil; and in like manner, as we speak of painting in oils, they spoke of painting in wax. A head done

in chalk would no more necessarily mean a head modeled in chalk or plaster, than "*imaginem* [or *effigiem*] *cera expressam*" would mean a likeness modeled in wax.

The substances on which the ancients painted were wood, clay, plaster, stone, parchment, and perhaps canvas. The best painters, however, rarely painted on anything but tablets or panels. "*Nulla gloria artificum est nisi eorum qui tabulas pinxere,*" says Pliny (xxxv. 37). These panels were of wood; they were prepared for painting by spreading over them chalk or white plaster (*gypsum*), and on that account were called "*λεύκωμα.*" All the paintings on walls were also on plaster covered with a composition of chalk and marble dust, as is fully described by Vitruvius.¹

Let us now apply these facts to Pliny's statement. May he not intend to say, and is not this a legitimate meaning of his words, that Lysistratus first of all modeled portraits in gypsum from life, and then increased the likeness by color laid on to the plaster bust. He also made colored copies or effigies from brass statues (which were called, as we know, "*ceræ*"), and these came so into vogue that thenceforward there were no statues without white clay or chalk, which, as we have seen, was a preparation for the wax color as shown by Vitruvius. In this view of his meaning, the statement that this peculiar process is older than that of casting in bronze becomes intelligible, if we suppose

¹ vii. 3, ii. 8. See, also. Pliny, xxv. 49.

him to intend to say that coloring statues was a very old process, while coloring portraits in exact imitation of life was the invention of Lysistratus. The succeeding sentence then becomes clear, in which he says that the most famous plastæ were Damophilus and Gorgasus, who were also painters, and who decorated the Temple of Ceres at Rome in both these arts, since it is plain that these works were both modeled and painted.

The making of portraits in effigy, colored in imitation of life, had been a common practice in Rome, as we learn from Pliny himself, and these, because they were colored, were technically called "*ceræ*" as well as "*imagines*." It was the custom of the great families to set up these colored figures in their atria, and on particular festivals to carry them in procession through the streets of Rome, draped with actual robes such as were worn by the persons whom they represented. Pliny expresses his regret that in his time this custom had fallen into disuse, tending as it did to keep fresh and alive the personal memory of great men who had passed away from this life.¹

It will be useful here to consider the character of the whole chapter in which this passage appears. It is entitled, "*Plastices primi inventores, de simulacris, et vasis fictilibus et pretio eorum*." The object of the chapter is to give an account of modeling and modelers, not of casting. In a previous chapter, where Pliny is speaking of some

¹ See, also, an account of these "*imagines*" in Polybius, vi. 53.

early products of the plastic art, and particularly of the *signa Tuscanica*, or earthenware statues, he says: "It appears to me a singular fact, that, though the origin of statues was of such great antiquity in Italy, the images of the gods, which were consecrated to them in their temples, should have been fashioned of wood or earthenware, until the conquest of Asia introduced luxury among us. It will be most convenient to speak of the art of making likenesses [*similitudines exprimendi*] when we come to speak of what the Greeks call 'plastice,' for the art of modeling was prior to that of statuary of bronze and marble, — *prior quam statuaria fuit*]. But this last art has flourished in such an infinite degree that to pursue the subject thoroughly would require many volumes." Thus he announces clearly beforehand what he intends to speak of in this chapter which we are now considering, on plasticæ. It is the art of "making likenesses, of the first invention of modeling, of fictile vases, and of their price," but not of casting or of any such invention. The previous chapter, in which this announcement is made of his subsequent intention, is devoted to casting in bronze and brass-work, or statuaria. After making this statement, he goes on to enumerate the principal works in bronze, and then says that portrait statues were long afterwards placed in the Forum and in the atria of private houses; that clients thus did honor to their patrons, and that in former times the statues thus dedicated were

dressed in togas: “*Togatæ effigies antiquitus ita dicabantur* ;” or ought not “*dicabantur*” to be *dicebantur*, — meaning that these statues were called “*togatæ effigies*” ?

In the chapter we are now considering, he begins by saying that, having already said enough about pictures, he now proposes to append some account of the plastic art. Then he speaks of Dibutades, and relates the story of his making the portrait of the girl he loved ; and adds that he first invented a method of coloring his works in pottery by adding red earth or red chalk. Then follows the passage about Lysistratus, who used plaster instead of clay to make portraits, covering it with wax or color to improve the resemblance. After the passages cited, he goes on to mention other celebrated modelers (*plastæ laudatissimi*), among whom were Damophilus and Gorgasus, who were also painters, and who adorned the Temple of Ceres at Rome by the exercise of both their arts. According to Varro, he says, everything in the temples was *Tuscanica*, — that is, ancient pottery of the Etruscan school ; and when they were repaired the painted coatings of the walls were removed and framed. He also mentions Chalcosthenes, who executed several works in baked earth. He cites Varro again as saying that Possis at Rome executed grapes, fruit, and fishes with such truth to Nature that they could not be distinguished from the real things. Dibutades, he also says, invented a method of coloring plastic composition by adding red earth.

Throughout the chapter Pliny is not speaking solely of modelers, but most of those he mentions colored their works. The grapes, fruit, and fishes of Possis, the works of Damophilus and Gorgasus, the *Tuscanica* in the temples, all were colored in imitation of the objects represented. And besides these he mentions particularly the Jupiter of Pa-siteles, made in clay, “et ideo miniari solitum,” — and therefore proper for painting in vermilion. He also speaks of “figlina opera,” — earthenware painted in encaustic, — which were on the baths of Agrippa in Rome. All this seems to lend probability to the interpretation of “cera” to mean color and not wax; at all events, there is not a word about casting, unless the words relating to Lysistratus can be tortured into such a meaning. What adds still more to the probability that this was the real thought of Pliny in the passage cited is the use of the words “effigies” and “argilla.” “Effigies” in Latin is distinguished from “simulacrum” (which may be a picture as well as a statue), both being representations indicating something which shows they are not life itself, the one being flat and the other colorless; while “effigies” carries the idea of deception with it, so far as resemblance goes. Thus Cicero says, “Vidistis non fratrem tuum nec vestigium quidem aut simulacrum, sed effigiem quamdam spirantis mortui.” So, also, “argilla” means white clay, and not ordinary clay out of which terracotta images were made; and Pliny may have

intended by these words to express the idea that after Lysistratus had made effigies or colored copies of brass or marble statues, white clay was constantly used, for the reason that it was manifestly better for coloring. This would relieve him from the absurdity of saying that Lysistratus invented or led the way in modeling in clay, rather than in the use of white clay which he colored. Argilla and gypsum would then be nearly the same thing, both used as a basis for colored walls, upon which "cera" or color was laid or infused. This would clear up the subsequent statement that this art was older than casting in bronze, since it is plain that coloring statues was very ancient. Pausanias mentions two, — one of the Ephesian Diana and one of Bacchus in wood, gilt except the faces, — which were painted with vermilion. So, in the Wisdom of Solomon (ch. xiii. and xv.), images of wood and clay are spoken of, painted in red and vermilion and stained with divers colors; and in 630 B. C. there were images in gold, silver, stone, and wood in Babylon (Baruch, ch. vi. and xiii.), painted and gilded and dressed, and colored purple.

In his chapter entitled "*Honos Imaginum*," — the honor attached to portraits, — Pliny says it was the custom of the Romans to adorn their *palæstra* and anointing-rooms with the portraits of athletes ("*imaginibus athletarum*"), and to carry about on their persons the face of Epicurus ("*vultus Epicuri*"); and that they also prized the por-

traits of strangers (“alienasque effigies colunt”). Afterwards, contrasting the habits of the Romans of his own day with those of the ancient Romans, he says: “And since the former have no longer in them any likeness to the minds of their ancestors, they also neglect the likeness of their bodies. How different it was,” he continues, “with our ancestors, who placed in their atria to be gazed at these ‘imagines,’ and not statues by foreign artists in brass or marble, and kept colored portraits of their faces each in its separate case, to serve as ‘imagines’ to accompany their funerals.”¹ It would seem from this that, besides the draped images or effigies in the halls, modeled and colored busts of others of the family, probably of less distinction, were also kept to be dressed up on occasion, made into effigies, and carried in procession. Other “imagines” of the most distinguished personages in the family were placed outside at the threshold of the house, hung with the spoils of the enemy.

It is of these “*expressi cera vultus*” and these “imagines” kept by the Romans as proofs of their nobility, and on which their pedigrees were inscribed, that Ovid speaks when he says, —

“*Per lege dispositas generosa per atria ceras.*”

On the sale of the house they were not allowed to

¹ *Et quoniam animorum imagines non sunt, negliguntur etiam corporum. Aliter apud majores, in atriis hæc erant quæ spectarentur, non signa externorum artificum, nec æra aut marmora. Expressi cera vultus singulis disponebantur armariis ut essent imagines quæ comitarentur gentilicium funera.* — Book 35, ch. 2.

be destroyed or removed, but passed with it, and were bought by “*novi homines*” (men of no family), and passed off by them as the portraits of their own ancestors, — just as the portraits of War-dour Street are at the present day. Cicero in his invective against Piso cries out, “*Obrepsisti ad honores errore hominum, commendatione fumosarum imaginum, quarum simile habes nihil præter colorem;*” and Sallust in his *Jugurtha* says, “*Quia imagines non habeo, et quia mihi nova nobilitas est.*”

Nor were the Romans singular in this custom of draping figures with real stuffs. The images of the gods in early Greece also were draped and dressed in clothes, and crowns were placed on their heads. They had false hair, too, which was dressed regularly by attendants, and at stated times they were washed and adorned with jewels and had their dresses arranged, just as if they were alive. In later times this custom died out; but the colossal Athena's solid drapery of gold was washed at a certain festival appointed for the purpose, called *Plyntheria*. In Rome, however, the custom was maintained to a late day. The images of the temples were adorned with real drapery, and purple mantles were hung on the statues of the emperors. The Greeks did not thus treat their portrait statues, and in this the Romans were peculiar.

The Roman “*imagines*” and “*ceræ*” were probably executed in plaster or some such material, cer-

tainly not in marble, or otherwise they would have been too heavy to be carried about in procession. Apparently they resembled the figures which Lysistratus first began to make, and the process of coloring them, if we understand "*cera*" to mean color, was little else than the old practice, called "*circumlitio*," of covering marble statues with an encaustic varnish of color so as to give them a delicate and tinted surface. The most salient example of this is to be found in the anecdote told of Praxiteles, who, when he was asked which of his statues he most admired, answered, "Those that Nicias has colored," — "*quibus Nicias manum admovisset*," — Nicias, who in his youth was celebrated as a painter of statues, ἀγαλμάτων ἐγκανστής, having assisted him, "*in statu circumliendis*." A similar process, called *καύσις*, was also employed in finishing walls, and is thus described by Vitruvius: After the wall had received its color, it was covered with Punic wax and oil, which was laid on evenly with a hard brush, and then half melted or infused into a smooth surface by moving a "*cauterium*," or pan of hot coals, close over it; and after that it was rubbed with a candle and a clean linen cloth.

This process, then, was old as applied to marble statues and to plaster walls. What was new in the work of Lysistratus was that he united the two methods, by modeling in plaster the general likeness and then finishing the surface in encaustic. It was an old process with a new application.

To explain such a process, what could be clearer than the words Pliny uses? We do not need to warp a word from its ordinary significance. Lysistratus made portraits in plaster from life, and improved them by color laid on to the model. He thus made realistic, exact resemblances, whereas before him artists had sought only to make heads as beautiful as possible.

What, then, were the “*effigies de signis*” that he made? We have already seen that the term “*effigies*” had a significance of reality and absolute imitation, and corresponded in great measure to the English word *effigy*, meaning colored effigies with real dresses, — like those of Madame Tussaud, for instance. The “*imagines*” and “*cœræ*” of the ancient Romans were very much like them; and does not Pliny mean to say that Lysistratus copied marble or brass statues, or pictures, and made these effigies from them, coloring them so as to add to the likeness, and clothing them with real draperies? and that this so grew into vogue that thenceforward there were no statues which were not thus copied in plaster or “*argilla*”? — using the term “*argilla*,” or white clay, as equivalent to gypsum, with which possibly the plaster was mixed. As “*argilla*” was the foundation with which the ancient panels were prepared for painting, this would seem most appropriate in such case.

Such would be the figures alluded to by Lucian, or by Lexiphanes when he says, “If you cull the flower of all these various beauties, you will in

your eloquence be like those makers of figures in wax and clay [or *argilla*] in the Forum, colored outside with minium and blue, and inside only fragile clay."

According to this interpretation of the passage in Pliny, it not only becomes intelligible as a whole, but is consistent and without contradiction ; whereas, if we suppose that he meant to indicate the process of casting in plaster, his statements are not only entirely obscure and inconsecutive, but ignorant and contradictory.

II.

IN the previous chapter we have critically considered the text of Pliny bearing upon the question whether the ancient Greeks and Romans were acquainted with the art of casting. Let us now proceed to some general considerations as to the probability that this art was known and practiced by them.

In the first place, the distinction between modeling and casting must be constantly kept in mind, and care must be taken not to confound the two totally different terms "mould" and "model." That gypsum was used in modeling there can be no doubt, and it is quite possible that it may have been used to fill prepared moulds of stone, terra cotta, or other materials for the making of *ectypa*. There is indeed no proof of this : but as we know

that moulds were made and cut in stone, into which clay was pressed, to be then withdrawn and baked for ectypa with which to adorn houses, so also it is possible that gypsum may have been used for this purpose. This, however, is merely a supposition, and the fact that none of them have ever been found in plaster renders it highly improbable. In these ectypa of clay, as well as in the impressions taken from them, there are no indications of anything like what we call a piece-mould, composed of many sections; and whenever there are under-cuttings in the ectypa, which could not be withdrawn from the mould and which would fasten them into it, these parts of the ectypa are invariably worked by hand. For instance, in the collection of Mr. Fol in Rome there are several terra-cotta figures of low relief evidently stamped from a mould, which are appliqué, or fastened subsequently to the cista of which they form a part. The sutures under each figure are still visible, but they are all corrected and worked by hand after being withdrawn, and have evidently suffered in being removed from the mould. In the same collection there are several specimens of plaster reliefs, with such deep under-cuttings that they could not have been withdrawn from a single piece-mould; but all these under-cuttings are freely worked by hand, showing plainly that they were not in the stamp or mould; and it is also clear that they were afterwards worked over with fluid plaster, the edges and flats of

which have not been rounded, but left as it was freely laid on by hand. It is probable that in these cases plaster was pressed into a mould in the same manner as clay, and afterwards worked up and finished. But the slightest examination will show clearly that if a mould was employed to give a general form to them, it certainly was not a piece-mould ; and that they are not castings in the modern sense of the word, but only rude stamps.

These, are the only specimens, however, so far as we are aware, of any such use of plaster for low-relief ornaments, — the ectypa which have been preserved to us being invariably of baked clay. If plaster had been used for this purpose, we should expect to find casts in the interior of houses or tombs, where they would be protected from the weather, and where they could be easily introduced into the walls and ceilings. But though elaborately ornamented designs in relief, worked in gypsum, are to be found still fresh and uninjured on the ancient tombs and baths, all of them were freely and rapidly modeled by hand while the gypsum was still fresh and plastic, and not a single specimen of cast plaster has been found. It is but a few years since the tombs in the *Via Latina* were opened, and in two of them the ceilings, divided into compartments, were covered with rich and fantastic designs of flowers, fruit, arabesques, groups of imaginary animals, sea-nymphs, and human figures ; the designs varying

in each compartment, and all modeled in the plaster with remarkable vivacity and spirit: not one of them was cast. So in the houses at Pompeii, not a vestige of a figure or ornament cast in plaster has ever been found, — nor a mould in plaster; and when one considers that, being completely protected, they would naturally have survived as well as other far more fragile and destructible objects which have been preserved, the evidence is almost absolute that they never could have existed there. If so, it is in the highest degree probable that they existed nowhere. It would seem plain, then, that even the first, simplest, and most natural processes of casting in gypsum were unknown to the ancients, for no other process is so easy and simple as to fill a flat mould with plaster and then remove it, provided there are no under-cuttings. In doing this, however, there is a slight practical difficulty if the mould is in one piece, as the least under-cutting would render it impossible to remove the cast without injury or breakage. Indeed, though there were no under-cutting, it would at least be very difficult to remove the plaster from a mould in one piece. Clay would be removed with far greater ease because of its pliancy, and any cracks or imperfections could be at once remedied; add to this that baked clay is one of the most enduring of materials, and we have the probable reasons why the ancients used it instead of gypsum. But whatever may have been their reasons, it is per-

fectly clear that they did use clay; and we have no evidence that they ever used plaster.

This use of gypsum to take impressions from flat moulds is suggested by Theophrastus, it would seem, in his treatise on mineralogy,¹ in which he says that plaster “seems better than other materials to receive impressions.” The term ἀπόμαγμα means nothing more than an impression, such as one makes in wax from a seal ring, and such as is common still in plaster; it is to this use that he seems to refer. He does not say, however, that gypsum was really put to this use; and if it were, it would advance us little in our inquiry, since any material which is soft will receive an impression, whether it be bread, pitch, clay, wax, or any similar substance.

But the step from this simple process of stamping in a shallow mould to casting from life or from the round is enormous. The difficulties are multiplied a hundred-fold. It is no longer a simple operation, but a nice and complicated one. The part to be cast must first be oiled or soaped, then covered with plaster of about the consistency of rich cream, then divided into sections while the material is still tender, so as to enable the mould to be withdrawn part by part without breakage, then allowed to set, then removed, oiled or soaped on the interior surface, the parts all properly replaced, fluid plaster poured into the mould,—and finally, after the cast is set, the mould must

¹ Διαφέρην δὲ δοκεῖ καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἀπομάγματα πολὺ τῶν ἄλλων.

be carefully removed by a hammer and chisel. This is an elaborate process as applied to an arm or a hand, but when applied to a living face it is not only difficult but disagreeable, and unless due care be used it may be dangerous; and after all a cast from the face is hard, forced, and unnatural in its character and impression, however skillfully it may be done, and can only serve the sculptor as the basis of his work. Yet if the common interpretation of the passage in Pliny be accurate, this is the process which was invented and practiced by Lysistratus, and by means of which he made portraits. *Credat Judæus!* With all our knowledge and practice, we do not find this to answer in our own time.

But to cast from a statue in clay is still more difficult and complicated; there the extremest care and nicety are required in making the proper divisions, in extracting the clay and irons, recommitting the sections, and breaking off the outer shell of the mould. In fact, the modern process is so complicated that no one can see it without wondering how it ever came to be so thought out and perfected, or without being convinced that it must have been slowly arrived at by many steps and many failures.

That statues were modeled in plaster by the ancients there is no doubt. Pausanias mentions several;¹ and Spartianus² also speaks of "Three

¹ Lib. ix. ch. 23; Lib. i. ch. 40; Lib. viii. ch. 22.

² Spartian., *Sev. Hadrian.*, 22.

Victories" in plaster, with palms in their hands, erected at one of the games, — and says that on one of the days of the Circensian games when according to common custom they were erected, the central one on which the name of Severus was inscribed, and which bore a globe, was thrown down by a gust of wind from the podium, and that another bearing the name of Geta on it also fell and was shattered to pieces.

Firmiens¹ also relates that after Zagreus, son of Jupiter, was slain by the Titans, his body was cut to pieces and thrown into a cauldron, from which Minerva rescued the heart and carried it to Jupiter. He then gave it to Semele, who resuscitated Zagreus, and Jupiter afterwards preserved his likeness in plaster, — "*Ex gypso plastico opere perfectit.*"

Mr. Perkins cites all these instances, and says: "They authorize us to believe that the Greeks and Romans practiced casting in plaster." But in saying this he altogether overlooks the very plain distinction between the two entirely different operations of casting and modeling. We know that they modeled in plaster; the only question is whether they *cast* in that material. The term for casting, as we have stated, was "*fundere*," and is always used when real casting in brass or other metal is spoken of; but nowhere is the term "*fundere*" applied to any work in gypsum. "*Ars*

¹ *De Errore Profanarum Religionum.* Vid. *Lobeck aglaopham*, p. 571.

fundendi æro" is constantly spoken of, — "ars fundendi gypso" never. Besides, the very phrase "ex gypso plastico opere perfecit" is at variance with casting. The words "plastico" and "opere" mean modeling, and nothing else.

But throughout this paper by Mr. Perkins these two completely distinct processes are constantly confounded with each other. It suffices for him to find a statement in an ancient writer that anything is made in plaster, or even an allusion to a plaster statue, and at once he jumps to the conclusion that the statue was necessarily cast, and not shapen or modeled.

"It remains for us now," he says, "to establish by undeniable proof how little foundation there is for the opinion of those who pretend that the ancients did not make use of plaster for casting, supporting their opinion on the complete absence of statues and statuettes in plaster, or fragments of any kind found in excavations, when nevertheless thousands of objects of the frailest kind are found, such as stuccoes, vases, terra cotta, glass, wax heads, etc. If it be true that the inclemencies of weather and atmospheric agents could cause the disappearance of plaster saturated with humidity, or placed in conditions favorable to its destruction, it does not necessarily follow that these conditions always reproduce themselves. It suffices, to convince one's self of this, to *glance at the plates* 67, 76, 85, in the magnificent work published at St. Petersburg on the antiquities of the Cimmerian

Bosphorus. These plates represent plasters preserved in the Museum of the Hermitage, coming from a tomb on Mount Mithridates opened in 1832, and from another tomb at Kertch excavated in 1843. These plasters date back to the fourth century before our era.¹ Adorned with various colors and executed in relief, they were destined to be attached as ornaments to other objects, such as sarcophagi, pilasters, walls, etc.”

Well! what if they were? Is this any proof that they were cast? Mr. Perkins is easily satisfied, if he is assured of this fact by looking at engraved plates. Are they all of the same size? Are they identical, as they would be if they were cast from the same mould, or are they like all other plaster and stucco work of the ancients of which we are cognizant, — ornaments modeled by hand? or are they pressures from a flat, shallow mould, like the *ectypa*? If the latter, they are almost unique; and so far they prove that the artists who made them understood this first and simplest process of casting, or rather of stamping. But from plates it would be impossible to determine this fact, and Mr. Perkins gives us no reason to think they are unlike all the other ancient stucco work. He does not profess to have seen and examined them for himself; at all events, one

¹ As Lysistratus and his brother lived about the 114th Olympiad (324 B. C.), if these works found at Kertch were plaster casts, it is plain that Lysistratus did not invent casting, since these were before his time; and if Pliny means to say that he did, he is evidently quite wrong.

fact is clear, that these, if they are in plaster, are painted plaster.

In the British Museum there exist some of these so-called casts in plaster from Cyrenaica and from Kertch. Undoubtedly they are nearer to being true casts than anything else which has as yet been discovered ; but, after all, a careful examination of them will show that they are not casts in the legitimate sense of the word, but merely stamps for a mould, and fashioned in precisely the same way that was employed in making the hollow terra cottas. To make these, a very rude stamp was executed, with no under-cuttings of any kind, everything being filled up which could impede the removal of the clay, which was pressed into the stamp, then carefully extracted again and finished by hand. All the terra-cotta reliefs called ectypa were made in this way, and some of the moulds still exist, — not one of them, however, in plaster. The same process was employed to make some of the figures of terra cotta in the round, by making a mould of two pieces divided in the middle, of a very generalized form, with no under-cuttings. Into each of these moulds a quantity of clay was squeezed ; the two parts were then removed carefully, and joined together. A general form was thus obtained, and the artist proceeded to model and to finish it with more or less care. In this way not only ectypa were made in clay and afterwards baked, but also small flat ornaments which were afterwards appliqué, or fastened on to flat or round

surfaces, — as on to cista. This is the process by which fragments of the figures from Cyrenaica and Kerteh in the British Museum were made. The junction of the two halves is clear. The work is very rude; there are no under-cuttings; everything is filled up which would in the least impede the withdrawal of the material from the stamp. There is, for instance, an arm and hand, with the interstices of the fingers quite filled up. But what clearly proves that these figures were not cast, as distinguished from stamped, is the head. Here the hair being adorned with a wreath with under-cuttings, it could not be withdrawn from the stamp without destroying it, and it is entirely appliqué, or worked on to the head after it was removed. Had it been cast, there would have been no such difficulty. Nor, again, is it quite clear that the material of these figures is pure gypsum. It would rather seem to be a mixture of gypsum with white clay, or argilla, to give it flexibility, and enable it to be withdrawn from the mould. Indeed, it may here be observed that it is in every way probable that the gypsum used by the ancients in modeling and ornamental work was differently prepared from that which we now use, and was mixed with some material which prevented it from setting rapidly, and gave it strength, ductility, and plasticity. Otherwise it is difficult to see how such works as those in the tombs of the Via Latina, which no one can doubt are modeled by hand, could have been executed with at once

so much finish and freedom. Gypsum, as we use it, would set too soon to enable us to work it in such a manner. In the tombs of the Via Latina which were lately discovered, it is worked as freely as if it were clay, and was plainly so prepared as to enable the artist to take his own time in modeling, without fear of its hardening — or, as we call it, setting — immediately.

This, then, is nothing new. It is not casting, and these figures are not casts. They are stamps, just like the *ectypa* of *terra cotta*. We know that *κοροκόσµια* or dolls were anciently made in this way of wax and gypsum, or of *terra cotta*; and these are *κοροκόσµια*.

To infer from the fact that the Greeks knew and practiced the art of pressing into shallow moulds of stone, without under-cuttings, either clay, pitch, wax, or plaster, that they also understood and practiced the art of making moulds and casts from life or from the round is utterly unwarrantable. Nothing is more simple than the one art, while the other is extremely complex. The one is merely like making an impression from a seal, which would naturally suggest itself to the first person who left the pressure of his foot in clay or mud; the other requires various processes of calculation and invention. In inventions it is not always or ordinarily the first step which costs, but the subsequent and calculated steps. Centuries often elapse between the first step and the second. A remarkable instance of this is to be

found in the history of the invention of printing. The first steps to this wonderful art were taken by the ancient Romans; the very process by which we now print was known and practiced by them; but the application of it to the printing of books does not seem to have occurred to their minds. It cannot, however, but appear most extraordinary that the idea of printing should not have occurred to them when we consider the facts of the case. Pliny relates that Cato published a book containing portraits of distinguished persons of his time, of which there were many copies; and so far as we can conjecture, these copies were probably stamped on parchment or some such material, and afterwards colored. Putting this together with the fact that ancient bricks have been lately found in Rome with names and numbers stamped upon them by means of movable types, so that the numbers or letters could be arranged at will, we might absolutely state that the ancient Romans understood and practiced the art of printing. They certainly did print on their brick; they probably stamped the portraits of cuts in their books, — but so far as we know they never united the processes, and never stamped a book with movable types. Adopting Mr. Perkins's method of argument, we might declare, however, that the mere fact that none of these printed books have ever come down to us was entirely inconclusive, since these books might have utterly perished; while we have the clearest proof that they did print with

movable types on brick, and therefore it is plain that they invented printing. The step from one of these processes to the other does indeed seem so evident, so natural, almost so inevitable, that we are puzzled to imagine how they could ever have overlooked it. Yet there is little doubt that they did. But from the simple fact of stamping in clay or plaster to the complex process of making moulds and casts in the round requires not one step but many, and each one of them requires calculation and invention. Indeed, if the art were now to be lost, it would be easy to conceive that centuries might pass before it would be reinvented.

In the collection of Mr. Fol of Rome, of which we have heretofore spoken, there are some interesting fragments of ancient statuettes in the round, very carefully finished in plaster, being the leg and thigh of one, and the half-breast and a portion of the torso of another. These are as carefully finished as if they were in marble, but they are elaborately worked by hand in the plaster, and not cast. These are exceedingly interesting as showing the method of the ancients in working in plaster, and they clearly illustrate the process of *Lysistratus* as described by Pliny, — the only difference being that the surface is of gypsum and not of wax, or color. The interior or core of these fragments, which is solid, is of lime, or a coarse kind of gypsum, and over the surface of this core is spread a thin coating of fine gypsum, which has been elab-

orately worked and smoothed on while it was fluid. The touches and creases on the surface are those of a modeler's hand and stick, and it differs in every way from a cast. It is therefore plain that the artist first made a core, or rough "*imaginem*" or "*formam*," of coarse gypsum, and that he improved, emended, and finished the surface, not by means of "*cera infusa in eam formam gypsi*," but of gypsum spread over it, — just as Lysistratus did. The language of Pliny is an exact description of this process.

Again, a strong negative indication that gypsum was not used for casting, or indeed to any extent in modeling, is to be found in the chapter by Pliny on gypsum. "Its use is," he says, "to whitewash [or parget], and to make small figures to ornament houses, and for wreaths." He also adds that it is a good medicine for pains in the stomach; but he entirely omits to mention that it was ever used for casting. Is it possible to believe that if it were so used he would not have alluded even to such a fact? Would it be conceivable that at the present day a chapter could be written on plaster of Paris, omitting its employment for the purpose of casting? After giving us this enumeration of the uses to which gypsum is applied, Pliny goes on to describe its nature, tell where it is found, and name the different kinds; and he concludes with no allusion to any other use than what he has previously stated.

Again, Pliny in the chapter on Lysistratus —

which it must be remembered is devoted to modeling — mentions one fact which seems to be inconsistent with any knowledge at that time of casting. Arcesilaus, he says, modeled a drinking-cup or mixing-bowl in plaster, which he sold to Octavius, a Roman knight,¹ for a talent (£250). It is impossible to believe that such an enormous price would have been given for a mere plaster bowl. If the process of casting from it was then understood, Arcesilaus might have repeated it in cast a thousand times, and the original and the cast being in the same material, one would have been quite as good as the other, if retouched. Yet he seems only to have made one, and to have asked a talent for that. Again, Lucullus made a contract with this same artist to model for him in plaster a statue of Fabatus, for which he agreed to pay him no less than 60,000 sesterces, or £530.

It is worth noting, too, as a curious fact, that just at the very time when Lysistratus is supposed to have invented plaster-casting, the art of brass-casting began to decline in character and style, and soon after seems to have died out and been lost; at all events, Pliny tells us that soon after the 120th Olympiad the art perished, — “cessavit deinde ars.” And as Lysistratus lived only about twenty-five years previously, it would be singular to find one of these arts dying out just as the other was being developed.

Mr. Perkins also thinks it valuable to tell us

¹ Pliny says “exemplar.”

that Canova was of opinion that the sculptors of antiquity made finished sketches, and then by means of proportional compasses enlarged them and took points on the marble; and he adds, "We should weigh these words of a great sculptor who devoted himself to the most minute researches on this subject, as well as to everything that had relation to the fine arts."

We agree that we should weigh the words of this distinguished sculptor, though we were not aware before that he was a profound archæologist, or had made minute researches on this subject. But how in any way does this tend to prove that the ancient Greeks and Romans knew how to cast in plaster? We are equally unable to see the precise bearing on this question of the fact also stated by him, that the drill is supposed by some to have been invented by Callimachus, and by others to have been used long before; or that the pointing of a statue was probably known to the Greeks, and certainly to the Romans.

Yet in a certain way the opinion of Canova that the ancients made small sketches, and by proportional compasses transferred their proportions, measures, and general forms to their large works, has an argumentative relation to the subject different from what Mr. Perkins probably supposed. This opinion is undoubtedly well founded, and accepting it as such, what does it indicate? That the process of casting in plaster was known to the ancients? By no means. So far as it goes,

it proves diametrically the opposite, — as Mr. Perkins might have seen, had he weighed the words of this great sculptor.

In fact, this leads us to one of the strongest arguments against the opinion apparently advocated by Mr. Perkins. Had the ancients known how to cast in plaster from the model, as they knew how to cast in bronze, this process of making small statuettes and enlarging therefrom would have been quite unnecessary. They would thus have escaped the incorrectness which is unavoidable in such a process, by at once making their models of full size, and completely finishing them in clay or other plastic material before transferring them to the marble. Their process probably was to make a small statuette in clay, and then bake it or dry it. But in transferring proportionally this small figure into a large one, an objection occurs. Defects scarcely perceptible in a small figure become gross defects when multiplied into a large one. Not only variations of one eighth of an inch more or less in small particulars in a figure a foot high would alter entirely the relative proportions of a figure eight feet high, but other inaccuracies inevitably occurring in enlarging by proportional compasses would increase these disproportions, so that the increased figure would be invariably untrue in its effect and in its measures. Now this is precisely what is apparent to any one who carefully studies the antique statues. Even in works showing the highest artistic knowledge and skill, the

want of correspondence of measures and proportions between the two sides of the figure is very manifest ; and the larger they are the more this is exhibited. Thus, to take one of the highest examples, in the Theseus we find astonishing knowledge and artistic skill in treatment, beside disagreements of measurement in corresponding parts, which are evidently the result of the defective mechanical process of enlargement. The legs are beautifully modeled, but of unequal length, — one being much longer in the thigh than the other. The same observation is true of the clavicle, and indeed throughout the statue. Now even an inferior artist would have seen and avoided these mistakes in modeling the statue full size, but the defect would be easily passed over by the eye in the small sketch, particularly if the statuette were merely a sketch, as was in all probability the usual case. It would be difficult to believe that an artist with the mastery shown in this statue would not have seen and corrected these mistakes, had the model of this figure been of the same size. This of course he perceived after the points were taken in the marble and the work was roughed out, but then it was too late to remedy them. This difficulty he and all other artists must constantly have felt. The question was how to avoid it. Nothing could have been more simple, if the modern process of casting in plaster from the clay model had been known to them. They would simply have modeled the statue in clay of its full size, cast it in

plaster, and been sure of its exact proportions and measures.

Let us take one step further. Had they understood the modern process of casting in plaster from the clay or from a statue, they could from the cast have multiplied in marble the same statue any number of times, identically or with such minute differences as few eyes could perceive. The *replique* in a modern sculptor's studio are scarcely to be distinguished from each other, and there would have been no difficulty in doing the same thing in an ancient sculptor's studio. What is the fact known? So far from this being the case, not only are there comparatively very few *replique* even of the most famous statues, for which there would necessarily be a great demand, but even in the various *replique* which we have there are not only no two which approach to identity either in attitude or in size, but one can scarcely say of any of them that the artist had more at best than a vivid recollection of the original or of some other replica, much less that he had it before him to copy even by eye. Often the attitude is changed, as well as the size and proportions; sometimes the action is reversed; and in all cases such differences exist as it is impossible that the clumsiest workman could have made with a cast of the original before him. Nor do we read or hear of any copies in our sense of copy; that is, exact reproduction of any of the great works of the great sculptors. Look, for instance, at the *Venus of the Capitol* and the

Venus de Medici and the St. Petersburg Venus; they are all repliche of the renowned statue by Praxiteles, but beyond the general attitude there is no resemblance, not so much as any clever artist of to-day could make from mere recollection. Look again at the portrait busts; how many are there of Marcus Aurelius, Octavius Cæsar, and Lucius Verus!—and no two of them approaching identity. Of the thousands of statues which have been excavated, no two are exact copies from the same model. There is at best nothing more than a family resemblance among those which are most alike. Would this be possible, if the ancients knew and practiced the art of casting in plaster as we do? It would seem to be utterly impossible, or at least improbable to the highest degree.

Again, why should not the great artists themselves, or their scholars, have made repliche of their famous statues? Nothing would have been easier had there been any casts from them. They were greatly coveted, and the prices paid for the original works were enormous, — so enormous that the largest prices of our day shrink into insignificance beside them. For the famous nude Venus by Praxiteles, Athens, in her extreme desire to possess it, offered in exchange to pay the whole public debt of the state to which it belonged. This offer, however, was peremptorily refused. Yet what could have been more easy, had a cast of it been in existence, or had they known how to make one, than for Praxiteles or his scholars to have

made an exact replica, fully equal to the original or even superior to it, with additional touches of the master's hand? That this was never done, or hinted at, proves that, the statue once having passed out of the artist's hands, he could repeat it from memory only by aid of his sketch; and this would not only have cost him as much labor as making a new statue, but would in no sense have been identical. Again, is it to be supposed that if Polyclitus had an absolute cast of his life-size statue of the Doryphoros which would have enabled him to repeat it with exactness, the original would have commanded such a price as one hundred talents, or £25,000? Or is it possible to suppose that Arcesilaus would have received a gold talent (£250) for a plaster bowl which could have been repeated by casting, for almost nothing? It was because it was modeled, and the modern process of casting in a piece-mould was unknown, that it commanded such a price. Here making a rude stamp without under-cuttings would not suffice. The *finesse* of the work could not be given, and the work would have been destroyed or greatly injured in the attempt.

If it be a fact that the Greeks and Romans knew this process, one would naturally expect to find at least some fragments of casts or moulds in plaster of their great works, — as for instance of their small and exquisite Corinthian bronzes, if not of their large figures. But, so far as we are aware, nothing of the kind has ever been found. The

whole city of Pompeii in the height of its luxury was buried under a fall of ashes, which for many long centuries preserved the most refined, fragile, and delicate utensils and works of art; and it is but a few years since that we removed these ashes and explored its houses and rooms which had been untouched since that fatal calamity befell them of which Pliny gives us so vivid an account. It is on the statements of the younger Pliny himself that those rely who claim that the ancients knew and practiced casting in plaster. Long before his day, then, this art had been invented; and we should naturally expect to find some specimens of it in this city of luxury, among its pictures, its vases, its statues, and its glass. But in all Pompeii there has not been found a vestige of a casting in plaster. Its stuccoes still remain, the bas-reliefs worked in plaster on its walls are still uninjured, its paintings are still fresh, its vases unbroken, its household utensils perfect. Hermetically sealed up under that mound of ashes, there was nothing to injure a cast in any house, if it existed. But there is absolutely nothing of the kind. Yet this was a people devoted to art, and whose houses were filled with knick-knacks of every kind. We find the sculptor's studio, but there is not a cast in it, nor is there the shop of a caster. It is plain, therefore, that there was not a cast in Pompeii.

But if anywhere there were casts from the round there were also piece-moulds from the round.

Where are they? Has any person ever heard of one? Now a hollow cast is comparatively a fragile object; but a plaster mould, saturated as it must be with oil, is anything but a fragile object. Sheltered from the inclemencies of storm and rain, it would last for thousands of years, and would even resist a century of exposure to the weather of Italy. But not underground nor aboveground anywhere has such a thing been found. Whatever moulds have been found are fit only for mere stamping. They are extremely rude, without under-cuttings, and seem merely to give a general shape. They are not cast upon anything, but worked out by hand, and are not in plaster. They are all small; nothing ever has been found which is either a mould, or a cast from life, or from a statue, or from a vase or bowl, or any careful work of art.

An ancient manufactory of terra cotta has been lately discovered and unearthed at Arezzo in Tuscany, and a large number of moulds was found, taken apparently from vases executed originally on some hard metal, probably in silver. The figures on these moulds are of the most exquisite design and execution, and for beauty and delicacy of finish exceed anything which remains to us of Greek or Etruscan art. There are no under-cuttings, and the relief is so low and flat as to yield an impression scarcely, if at all, higher than a seal or intaglio. All these moulds, however, are in terra cotta. Not one is in plaster, though in this material they

could have been executed more easily and exactly, and could have been reproduced in the original size. Of course, first taken, as they were, in soft clay, then baked, they of necessity shrank in size and were subject to warping and cracking, all which defects would have been avoided had they been made in plaster. All this would indicate that the use of plaster in making moulds was not practised at that period, even in such a simple operation as this.

In face of this we must say we do not agree with Mr. Perkins when he thinks he "establishes by undeniable proof how little founded is the opinion of those who pretend that the ancients did not practice casting in plaster, — sustaining it by the complete absence of statues and statuettes of plaster or fragments of any kind in the excavations, when nevertheless thousands of objects are found of the most fragile nature ;" and especially when the undeniable proof which he offers is the existence of some works and arabesque ornaments in plaster found at Kertch, and supposed to belong to the fourth century before the Christian era, and which apparently he has never seen. On the contrary, we should like to know how he explains the fact that no indubitable ancient moulds or castings have ever been found.

But Mr. Perkins does not seem to reason beyond his texts. He does not discuss the probabilities of the case ; he does not undertake to account for, or to harmonize with his view, the great fact that

nothing has been found of ancient art cast in plaster. Outside of what is written in books he does not venture. He does not even seem to have a clear opinion of his own. He says, "Sur ce point [casting in plaster] les textes nous laissent dans les ténèbres. Faut-il s'en étonner? Non! Les auteurs classiques trompent notre curiosité sur des choses d'un bien autre intent. Que nous disent-ils des vases peints, dont les musées de l'Europe regorgent? Rien," etc. Well, if the texts leave us in darkness, are we then to know nothing and to think nothing? Are we not to exercise our minds, and if a doubtful text seems to indicate a fact utterly at variance with our reason and with the facts we know, are we to treat that text as a fetich, and bow down and worship it, because it is written in a book? Are we to endeavor to wrench everything into harmony with it? Or, if it will not agree with facts of which there is no doubt, are we not rather to sacrifice the text than our own reason? And especially, are we to pay such reverence to a doubtful text of Pliny, the most careless of writers, the least accurate of archæologists? As to the painted vases, no argument or ancient texts are needed; there is no question in respect to them; they existed in great numbers; but in respect to casting in plaster there is nothing but texts to depend upon. Nay more, there is only one passage in any ancient author, so far as I am aware, that *seems* to assert the existence of this process; and the question is as to the meaning of this very am-

biguous passage. If it means what Mr. Perkins supposes, where are the moulds ; where are the casts ; where are the finished likenesses ; where is there anything, in a word, to support the statements of Pliny, as thus interpreted ? Does it not seem amazing that they should all have totally disappeared ?

That the text of Pliny, on which all rests, does not mean what it is supposed to mean by Mr. Perkins, we have endeavored to show ; but at all events, since it is admitted to be most obscure and scarcely intelligible, it would be better to throw the text overboard, if it is in conflict with all we know and is improbable in itself, particularly when we take into consideration the corrupt condition of the entire text of Pliny. Dr. Brunn, who is certainly an able and learned archæologist, does not hesitate to reject a portion of this very text, from the words “ *idem et de signis effigiem exprimere,*” as an interpolation ; and there can be no doubt in the mind of any one who carefully examines it that this entire passage is full of confusion of ideas and statements.

Mr. Perkins endeavors to strengthen his position, and also the text of Pliny as he understands it, by a citation from the “ *Tragic Jupiter* ” of Lucian, in which the statue of Hermes complains that he is spotted by the pitch with which the sculptors cover his limbs every day, “ *afin de les reproduire,*” he gratuitously adds, with no authority in the text for such a statement ; and *apro-*

pos of this he tells us that one may “model with pitch mixed with marble dust or brick.” He adds: “It is what the Italians call ‘ciment,’ and they employ it for the most delicate parts of the mould. It is sufficient in order to keep it in a malleable state to set the piece on which one is working near the fire, or to soften it from time to time in a bath of hot water.” “Now this information,” he continues, “which we owe to one of the most eminent and learned artists of our age, is very precious, since it gives us the real meaning of the passage in Lucian.” This taken in connection with a passage in Apollodorus representing Dædalus making a statue to Hercules *ἐν πίσσῃ* or *ἐν πίσῃ* — the word is doubtful — induces Mr. Perkins “to conclude, first, that two centuries before the Christian era, pitch was used, mixed without doubt with other substances, to cast statues [*mouler les statues*]; second, that the passage in Lucian not only contains one of those railleries of which the Voltaire of antiquity was so prodigal, but leads us to suspect that it veils the indication of one of the processes of casting.” That is, first he inclines to the opinion that *πίσῃ* (pitch) is a misprint for *πίτρυς* (pine wood), and that the statue made by Dædalus was in wood; and then he immediately turns around, and thinks that it proves the existence of casting in plaster. It cannot mean both; and the probability would seem to be that he is wrong in both suppositions, and that Dædalus was only employed in painting his statue in resin or wax.

The seriousness of this passage is more remarkable than its accuracy. Who can the eminent and learned artist be who has given us this so precious information? — “ce renseignement tres-précieux,” — which is known to every humble caster in Europe, — though he is not quite correct in the composition of what he says the Italians call “ciment.” He must be a French artist who scorns the Italian language as being, in the words of another of his countrymen, “rien que de mauvais Français.” “Ciment” is not an Italian word, and “cemento” has a quite different significance, — that of attempt or essay. The Italian casters call this material “cera,” though it is not wax. But aside from this, let us consider this passage from Lucian to which Mr. Perkins, following other writers, refers us as showing that the process of casting in plaster was known to the ancient Greeks.

The Ζεὺς Τραγῳδός of Lucian is a satire on the divinities of Greece, and a council of them is called to deliberate on what should be done in consequence of an assault upon their nature and power by Damis. The gods are called upon, and a question arises as to the precedence they should have, whether it should be according to the material of which they are made, — of ivory, gold, bronze, stone, or clay, — or according to the excellence of their workmanship and the skill of the artist; but such confusion of claims is made that no precedence is finally allowed to any one, and the question as to the reasons and arguments of Damis

and his opponent Timocles is discussed. While this is going on, a figure is seen approaching which is thus described : —

“But who is this who comes in such haste [ὁ χαλκοῦς, ὁ εὐγραμμος, ὁ εὐπερίγραφος, ὁ ἀρχαῖος τὴν ἀνάδεσιν τῆς κόμης], this bronze, this beautifully chased or engraved, beautifully outlined, the archaic in the arrangement of his hair [πίττης γοῦν ἀναπέπλησαι, ὀσημέραι ἐκματτόμενος ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνδριαντοποιῶν]; he is clogged with pitch from seals or impressions being daily taken from it by the sculptors.”

Hermes, the bronze, then answers : —

“It happened lately that my breast and back were covered with pitch by the *sculptors in bronze*, and a ridiculous cuirass was thus formed on my body, and by imitative art received a complete seal from the brass.”¹

This passage is supposed to indicate the process of casting in plaster. It is possible that it may indicate a preparation in pitch to cast in bronze, but certainly not in plaster, which is the sole question. It is not workers in plaster who are engaged on it, but workers in bronze; and what they were doing was plainly to take impressions of the intaglio chasing or engraving on the body of the figure. The description of the bronze is that it

¹ Ἐτύγχανον μὲν ἄρτι χαλκουργῶν ἶπο
Πιττούμενος στέρνον τε καὶ μετὰφρενον·
Θώραξ δέ μοι γελοῖος ἀμφὶ σώματι
Πλασθεῖς παρῳόρητο μιμίλη τέχνη
Σφραγίδα χαλκοῦ πᾶσαν ἐκτυπούμενος.

was archaic, and beautifully traced and engraved. It may have been a term engraved with verses, or figures, or inscriptions; and this is by no means improbable, as it represented Hermes, and as nothing but the breast and back was covered with pitch. At all events, the process was one which seems to have been carried on, not for once, but daily. It may have been the famous Hermes ἀγοραῖος, which was cast in the 34th Olympiad, and was a study for brass casters. Again, it may not have been a figure in the round, but merely a bas-relief, or intaglio; and this supposition would be entirely in accordance with the hieratic and archaic sculpture in brass, marble, and terra cotta. Many were executed thus in intaglio and engraved, — some of which still remain, — and others in relief. A list of such may be found in Müller's "Ancient Art" (pp. 61–65). If the passage refers to making a mould for casting, it was for casting in bronze and not in plaster, though nothing is said about casting, but merely of taking impressions or seals. The words ἐκτυπούμενος and ἐκματτόμενος mean expressions from a seal or stamp. Exactly what the sculptors were doing, however, to this statue covers the process of brass casters. Thus Lucian, speaking of a certain brass statue in the Agora, says: οἶσθα τὸν χαλκοῦν τὸν ἐσῶτα ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ, καὶ τὰ μὲν πιττῶν τὰ δὲ εὔων διετέλεσα, — "You know the brass statue standing in the forum, on which I was occupied pitching and drying," or burning.

But there is nothing new in all this, and nothing which throws any light upon the subject in question. It was, as we well know, a common practice of the Greeks, in making their large statues, to build up a core of wood, brickwork, plaster, and other materials as a foundation or rough sketch. On the surface of this in their chryselephantine statues they veneered sheets of gold and ivory, sometimes covering the entire surface with these precious materials, and sometimes finishing portions of them with an exterior of plaster or clay, which was painted in imitation of life. This for instance was the case with the Dionysos in Kreusis, described by Pausanias, of which the whole figure was modeled in plaster and afterwards colored. It would also seem to have been a practice with the Greek artists to cover these roughly executed cores with a composition of resin and pitch which they indurated by fire; and afterwards to finish the surface in the same material. Such at least appears to be the process indicated by Lucian in the passage just quoted, in which he speaks of the statue he was engaged in pitching and drying; as well as by Apollodorus in a passage in which Dædalus is described as making a statue of Hercules in pitch (πίσσα). The term "pissa" in this last passage has by some translators been supposed to be a misprint for ἐν πίσσῃ, meaning that this statue was a ζόανον executed in pine wood like other Dædalian figures. As it stands in the original, certainly, it is πίσσα, and means

pitch ; and it is quite as probable that it is correct and means a sort of encaustic finish with resin and gum. However this may be, there is little doubt that in making their bronze statues the Greeks used a surface of wax and pitch, or some such material, which was plastic and would melt ; and it is well known that they spread wax over their statues to give them a polished surface, and also finished their plaster walls with a covering of wax.

In making large statues, a skeleton framework of wood was often employed, called *κίμβαρος*, or *κάμβαρος*, which was covered with solid material, — clay, plaster, brick, pitch, etc., all welded together to form a solid core over which the surface was finished in clay, plaster, pitch, ivory, or gold. In the “*Somnium, seu Gallus*” of Lucian, Gallus says, speaking of himself, “If he were king, he should be like one of the colossi of Phidias, Praxiteles, or Myron, which though externally like Neptune or Jupiter, — splendid with ivory and gold, bearing the trident or the thunderbolt, — yet if you look inside you will find them composed of beams and bolts and nails traversing them everywhere, and braces and ridges, and pitch and clay, and other ugly and misshapen things.”

It is a curious fact bearing generally on this subject that no allusion is ever made to such a person as a caster in plaster. Plutarch, enumerating the various trades and occupations to which the great public works of his time gave employment, speaks of operatives, modelers, brass-work-

ers, stone-workers, gold and ivory workers, weavers, and engravers, but never mentions a caster. Philostratus also, enumerating the different classes of workmen in the plastic art, makes no mention of casters. Pliny never speaks of them. Indeed, their existence is never mentioned by any ancient writer.

All things considered, then, in conclusion, it seems impossible to believe that Pliny intended, in the passage relating to Lysistratus, to declare that he invented any method of casting in plaster, but rather that he intended to say that Lysistratus either modeled likenesses in wax over a core of gypsum, or, what is much more probable, that he colored his likenesses in imitation of life; and that his specialty was making accurate and literal likenesses in the round with color, thus uniting the two arts of the painter and the sculptor.

The process of casting in plaster, in our acceptance of the phrase, is of modern origin, and so far as we know was invented in the fifteenth century, a little before the time of Verrocchio (1432-1488), the master of Leonardo da Vinci. He was among the first who employed it, and may fairly be said to have introduced it. At all events, the first clear mention of this process of which we are aware is by Vasari in his life of Verrocchio; and he states that this sculptor and painter "cast hands, knees, feet, legs, even torsi, in order to copy them at his leisure; and that soon after casts began to be made from the faces of persons

after death, so that one sees in every house in Florence, on mantel-pieces, doors, windows, and cornices, a great number of these portraits, which seem alive." For some time after it seems to have been used chiefly for taking casts from dead faces, — or hands and feet, — and not to have been applied to casting from models of clay. The general practice of that period was to make a small model in clay, then to bake it, and from this model by proportional compasses to enlarge it and point it upon the marble. The process of casting from clay models seems not to have been practiced then, and so far as we know models of full size in clay were rarely if ever made, until rather a comparatively recent period.

A CONVERSATION WITH MARCUS AURELIUS.

It was a dark and stormy night in December. Everybody in the house had long been in bed and asleep ; but, deeply interested in the “Meditations of Marcus Aurelius,” I had prolonged my reading until the small hours had begun to increase, and I heard the bells of the Capucin convent strike for two o'clock. I then laid down my book, and began to reflect upon it. The fire had nearly burned out, and, unwilling yet to go, I threw on to it a bundle of canne and a couple of sticks ; again the fresh flame darted out, and gave a glow to the room. Outside, the storm was fierce and passionate. Gusts beat against the panes, shaking the old windows of the palace, and lashing them with wild rain. At intervals a sudden blue light flashed through the room, followed by a trampling roar of thunder overhead. The fierce libeccio howled like a wild beast around the house, as if in search of its prey, and then died away, disappointed and growling, and after a short interval again leaped with fresh fury against the windows and walls, as if maddened by their resistance. As I sat quietly gazing into the fire and musing on many shadows of thought that

came and passed, my imagination went back into the far past, when Marcus Aurelius led his legions against the Quadi, the Mareomanni, and the Sarmati, and brought before me the weather-beaten tent in which he sat so many a bleak and bitter night, after the duty of the day was done, and all his men had retired to rest, writing in his private diary those noble meditations, which, though meant solely for his private eye, are one of the most precious heritages we have of ancient life and thought. I seemed to see him there in those bleak wilds of Pannonia, seated by night in his tent. At his side burns a flickering torch. Sentinels silently pace to and fro. The cold wind flirts and flaps the folds of the prætorium, and shakes the golden eagle above it. Far off is heard the howl of the wolf prowling through the shadowy forests that encompass the camp; or the silence is broken by the sharp shrill cry of some night bird flying overhead through the dark. Now and then comes the clink of armor from the tents of the cavalry, or the call of the watchword along the line, or the neighing of horses as the circitores make their rounds. He is ill and worn with toil and care. He is alone; and there, under the shadow of night, beside his camp-table, he sits and meditates, and writes upon his waxen tablets those lofty sentences of admonition to duty and encouragement to virtue, those counselings of himself to heroic action, patient endurance of evil, and tranquillity of life, that breathe the highest

spirit of morality and philosophy. Little did he think, in his lonely watches, that the words he was writing only for himself would still be cherished after long centuries had passed away, and would be pondered over by the descendants of nations which were then uncultured barbarians, as low in civilization as the Pannonians against whom he was encamped. Yet of all the books that ancient literature has left us, none is to be found containing the record of higher and purer thought, or more earnest and unselfish character. As I glanced up at the cast of the Capitoline bust of him which stood in the corner of my room, and saw the sweet melancholy of that gentle face, ere care and disappointment had come over it and ruled it with lines of age and anxiety, a strange longing came over me to see him and hear his voice, and a sad sense of that great void of time and space which separated us. Where is he now? What is he now? I asked myself. In what other distant world of thought and being is his spirit moving? Has it any remembrance of the past? Has it any knowledge of the present? Yet the hand that wrote is now but dust, which may be floating about the mausoleum where he was buried, near the Vatican, or perhaps lying in that library of the popes upon some stained manuscript of this very work it wrote, to be blown carelessly away by some studious abbé as he ranges the volume on its shelf among the other precious records of the past.

The hand is but dust, yet the thoughts that it recorded are fresh and living as ever. Since he passed from this world, how little progress have we made in philosophy and morality! Here in this little book are rules for the conduct of life which might shame almost any Christian. Here are meditations which go to the root of things, and explore the dim secret world which surrounds us, and return again, as all our explorations do, unsatisfied. All these centuries have passed, and we still ask the same questions and find no answer. Where he is now he knows the secret, or he is beyond the desire to know it. The mystery is solved for him which we are guessing, and his is either a larger, sweeter life, growing on and on — or everlasting rest. A stoic, he found comfort in his philosophy, as great perhaps as we Christians find in our faith. He believed in his gods as we believe in ours. How could they satisfy a mind like his? How could these impure and passionate existences, given to human follies and weaknesses, to low intrigues, to vulgar jealousies, to degraded loves, satisfy a nature so high, so self-denying, so earnest, so pure? Yet they were his gods; to them he sacrificed, in them he trusted, looking forward to a calm future with a serenity at least equal to ours, undisturbed by misgivings; believing in justice, and in unjust gods; believing in purity, and in impure gods.

“No!” said a mild voice, “I did not believe in impure and unjust gods.”

And looking up, I saw before me the calm face of the emperor and philosopher of whom I was thinking. There he stood before me as I knew him from his busts and statues, with his full brow and eyes, his sweet mouth, his curling hair, now a little grizzled with age, and a deep meditative look of tender earnestness upon his face.

I know not why I was not startled to see him there, but I was not. It seemed to me natural, as events seem in a dream. The realities, as we call those facts which are merely visionary and transitory, vanished; and the unrealities, as we call those of thought and being, usurped their place. Nothing seemed more fitting than that he should be there. To the mind all things are possible and simple, and there is no time or space in thought which annihilates them.

I arose to greet my guest with the reverence due to such a presence.

"Do not disturb yourself," he said, smiling; "I will sit here, if you please;" and so speaking, he took the seat opposite me at the fire. "Sit you," he continued, "and I will endeavor to answer some of the questions you were asking of yourself."

"Had I known your presence I should hardly, perhaps, have dared to ask such questions, or at least in such a form," I said.

"Why not ask them of me if you ask them of yourself?" he responded. "They were just and natural in themselves, and the forms of things are

of little use to one who cares for the essence — just as the forms of the divinities I believed in are of no consequence compared to their essences. What we call thoughts are but too often mere formulas, which by dint of repetition we finally get to believe are in themselves truths, while they are in fact mere dead husks, having no life in them, and which by their very rigidity prevent life. No single statement, however plausible, can contain truth, which is infinite in form and in spirit. If we are to talk together, let us free ourselves, if we can, from formulas, since they only check growth in the spirit, and, so to speak, are mere inns at which we rest for a moment on account of our weariness and weakness. If we stay permanently in them we narrow our minds, dwarf our experience, and make no more progress. For what is truth but a continual progression towards the divine ? ”

“ Yet would you say that formulas are of no use ? that we should not sum up in them the best of our thought ? ”

“ Undoubtedly they are useful. They are trunks in which we pack our goods ; but as we acquire more goods, we must have larger and ever larger trunks. It is only dead formulas which kill, and the tendency of formulas is to die and thus to repress thought. Look at the nutshell that holds the precious germ of the future tree. It is a necessary prison of a moment ; but as that germ quickens and spreads, the shell must give way, or

death is the consequence. The infinite truth can be comprehended in no formula and no system. All attempts to do this have resulted in the same end — death. Every religious creed should be living, but every Church formalizes it into barren words and shapes, and ere long, Faith — that is, the living, aspiring principle — dies, wrapped up in its formal observances or rigid statements, and becomes like the dead mummies of the Egyptians — the form of life, not the reality.”

“Too true,” I answered, “all history proves it. Every real and thinking man feels it. As habits get the better of our bodies, so conventions and formulas get the better of our minds. But pray continue ; I only listen ; and pardon me for interrupting you.”

“What I say has direct relation to the questions you were asking when I entered. There is a grain, often many grains, of truth in every system of religion, but complete Truth in none. If we wait until we attain the perfect before adhering to one, we shall never arrive at any. Each age has its religious ideas, which are the aggregate of its moral perceptions influenced by its imaginative bias, and these are shapen into formulas or systems, which serve as inns, or churches, or temples of worship. These begin by representing the highest reach of the best thought of the age, but they soon degenerate into commonplaces, thought moving on beyond them, and of its very vitality of nature seeking beyond them. At these inns the

common mass put up, and the host or priest controls them while they are there, and society organizes them, and so a certain good is attained. In what you call the ancient days, when I lived on the earth, I found a system already built and surrounded by strong bulwarks of power. To strike at that was to strike at the existence of society. A religious revolution is a social revolution; one cannot alter a faith without altering everything out of which it is moulded. To do that, more evil might result than good. Man's nature is such that if you throw down the temple of his worship at once, assaulting its very foundations, you do not improve his faith; you but too often annihilate it, so implanted is it in old prejudices, in the forms stamped on the heart in youth, and in the habits of thought. It is only by gradual changes that any real good can be done — by enlarging and developing the principles of truth which already exist, and not by overthrowing the whole system at once."

"But in the religious system to which you gave your adherence," I exclaimed, "what was there grand and inspiring? What truth was there out of which you could hope to develop a true system? for certainly you could not believe in the divinities of your day."

"Reverence to the gods that were," he answered, "to a power above and beyond us; recognition of divine powers and attributes. This lay as the corner-stone of our worship, as it does of yours."

“Almost,” I cried, “it seems to me worse to worship such gods as yours than to worship none at all. Their attributes were at best only human, their conduct was low and unworthy, their passions were sensual and debased. Any good man would be ashamed to do the acts calmly attributed to the divinities you worshiped. This, in itself, must have had a degrading influence on the nation. How could man be ashamed of any act allowed and attributed to the gods?”

“Your notions on this point are natural,” he calmly answered, “but they are completely mistaken. There is no doubt that in every system of religion the tendency is to humanize and, to a certain extent, degrade God. To attribute to Him our own passions is universal, with the mass. To deify man or to humanize God is the rule. You deify that beautiful character named Christ, and you humanize God by representing Him as inspired with anger and cruelty beyond anything in our system. You attribute to Him a scheme of the universe which is to me abhorrent. Will you excuse me if I state thus plainly how it strikes one who belonged to a different age and creed, and who therefore cannot enter into the deep-grained prejudices and ideas of your century and faith?”

“Speak boldly,” I said. “Do not fear to shock me. I am so deeply planted that I do not fear to be uprooted in my faith. And, besides, that is not truth which does not court assault, sure to be strengthened by it. If you can overthrow my faith, overthrow it.”

“*That* I should be most unwilling to do,” he answered. “No word would I say to produce such a result. In your faith there is a noble and beautiful truth, which sheds a soft lustre over life ; and in my own day the pure and philosophic spirit of Jesus of Nazareth was recognized by me and revered. ’T is not of Him I would speak, but rather of the general scheme of the regulation of this world by God that I alluded to ; and I yet pause, fearing to shock you by a simple statement of this creed.”

“I pray you do not hesitate ; speak ! I am ready and anxious to hear you.”

“It is only in answer to what you say of the acts and passions attributed by us to our divinities, as constituting a clear reason why we should not reverence them, that I speak. You attribute to your God omnipotence, omniscience, and infinite love. Yet in his omnipotence He made first a world, and then placed in it man and woman, whom He also made and pronounced good. In this, according to your belief, He was mistaken. The man and woman proved immediately not to be good ; and He, omnipotent as He was, was foiled by another power named Satan, who upset at once his whole scheme. After infinite consideration and in pity for man, He could or did invent no better scheme of redeeming him than for Himself, or an emanation from Himself, to take the form of man, and to suffer death through his wickedness and at his hands. Thus man, by adding to the

previous fault the crime of killing God on the earth, acquired a claim to be saved from the consequences of his first fault. A new crime affords a cause of pardon for a previous fault of disobedience. What was this first fault, which induced God to drive the first man and woman out of the Paradise He had made for them? Simply that they ate an apple when they were prohibited. Is any pagan legend more absurd than this? Then for the justice of God, on what principle of right can the subsequent crime and horror — without example — of killing God, or a person, as you say, of the Trinity, afford a reason for removing from man a penalty previously incurred? When one remembers that you assume God to be omniscient as well as omnipotent, and that He might have made any other scheme, by simply forgiving man, or obliging him to redeem himself by doing good and acting virtuously, instead of committing a crime and a horror, this belief becomes still more strange. Nor can you explain it yourself; you only say it is a mystery which is beyond your reason, but none the less true. Yet though it offends all sense of justice and right in my mind, you believe it and adhere to it as a corner-stone of your faith. Are you sure I do not offend you?"

"Pray go on," I said. "When you have said it is a mystery, you have said all. Shall man, with his deficient reason, pretend to understand God? This is a truth revealed to us by his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who was himself in a

human form ; and when God reveals to us a mystery, shall we not believe it? Shall we measure Him by our feeble wits?"

"I do not mean to argue with you. This is furthest from my intention ; though I might say this holds good of us in the ancient days, as well as with you now. I only wish, however, to show you that you believe what you acknowledge to be beyond reason — a mystery, as you call it. You believe this, and yet you despise the pagan for believing what his gods told him, simply because it was unreasonable or ridiculous."

"The question," I said, "is very different ; but let it pass. Pray go on."

"Your God is a God of infinite love, you say. Yet in the opinion of many of you, at least, this infinitely loving God, omnipotent, and having the power to make man as He chose, — omniscient, and knowing how to make him good and happy if He wished to, — has chosen in his love to make him weak and impotent, to endow him with passions which are temptations to evil, to afflict him with disease and pain, to render him susceptible to torments of every kind and sufferings beyond his power to avoid, however he strive to be good and virtuous and obedient ; and then at the last, after a life of suffering and struggle here, either to save him and make him eternally happy, or, if He so elect, without any reason intelligible to you or any one, to plunge him into everlasting torment, from which he can never free himself. Now, I ask

you in what respect is such a God better than Jupiter, who, even according to the lowest popular notions, whatever were his passions, was at least placable ; who, whatever were his follies, was not a demon like this ? And when one takes into consideration the fact that there is not a humane man living who would not be ashamed to do to his own child, however vicious, what he calmly attributes to this all-loving God, the belief in such a God seems all the more extraordinary."

"It is a mystery," I said, "that one like you, born in another age and tinctured with another creed, could not be expected to understand. It would be useless for me to attempt it, and certainly not now, when I so greatly prefer hearing you to speaking myself. My purpose is not now to defend my religion, but to listen to your defense of yours."

"Well, then, allow us to have our mystery too. If you cannot explain all, neither could we ; but neither with us nor with you was that a reason for not believing at all. It was the mystery itself, perhaps, that attracted us and attracts you. The love of the unintelligible is at the root of all systems of religion. If man is unintelligible to us, shall not God be ? Man has always invested his gods with his own passions, and his gods are for the most part his own shadows cast out into infinite space, enlarged, gigantic, and mysterious. Man cannot, with the utmost exercise of his faculties, get out of himself any more than he can leap over

his own shadow. He cannot comprehend (or inclose within himself) God, who comprehends and incloses him; and therefore he vaguely magnifies his own powers, and calls the result God. God the infinite Spirit made man; but man in every system of religion makes God. In our own reason He is the best that we can imagine — that is, our own selves purged of evil and extended. We cannot stretch beyond ourselves.”

“Ay, but your gods were not the best you could conceive. They were lower of nature than man himself in some particulars, and were guilty of acts that you yourself would reprove.”

“This is because you consider them purely in their mythical history, according to the notions of the common ignorant mass; not looking behind those acts which were purely typical, often simply allegorical, to the ideas which they represented and of which they were incarnations. You cannot believe that so low a system as this satisfied the spiritual needs of those august and refined souls who still shine like planets in the sky of thought. Do you suppose that Plato and Epictetus, that Zeno and Socrates, that Seneca and Cicero, with their expanded minds, accepted these low formulas of Divinity? As well might I suppose that the low superstitions of the Christian Church, in which the vulgar believe, represent the highest philosophy of the best thinkers. Yet for long centuries of superstition the Church has been accepted by you just as it stands, with its saints and

their miracles, and its singular rites and ceremonies. Nor has any effort been made to cleanse the bark of St. Peter of the barnacles and rubbish which encumber and defile it. Religious faith easily degenerates into superstition in the common mind. And why has the superstition been accepted? Simply because it is so deeply ingrained into the belief of the unthinking mass, that there might be danger of destroying all faith by destroying the follies and accidents which had become imbedded in it. Not only for this; by means of these very superstitions men may be led and governed, and leaders will not surrender or overthrow means of power. Yet the best minds," he continued, "did what they could in ancient days to purify and refine the popular faith, and sought even to elevate men's notions of the gods by educating their sense of the beautiful, and by presenting to them images of the gods unstained by low passions and glorious in their forms."

"But surely your idea of Jupiter or Zeus," I answered, "was most unworthy when compared with that which we entertain of the infinite God, the source of all created things, the sole and supreme Creator. The Hebrews certainly attained a far loftier conception in their Jehovah than you in your Jupiter."

"What matter names?" he replied; "Zeus, Jehovah, God, are all mere names, and the ideas they represented were only differenced by the temperaments and character of the various peoples who worshiped them."

“But the Jehovah of the Jews was not merely the head ruler of many gods, but a single universal God, one and infinite!”

“No! I think not. The Jehovah of the Jews underwent many changes and developments with the growth of the Hebrew people; and in many of their writings He is represented as a passionate, vindictive, and even unreasonable and unjust God, whose passions were modified by human arguments. And, so far from being a universal God of all, He was specially the God of the Hebrews, and is so constantly represented in their Scriptures. He comes down upon earth and interferes personally in the doings of men, and talks with them, and discusses questions with them, and sometimes even takes their advice. In process of time this notion is modified, and assumes a nobler type; but He is never the Universal Father, nor the God whose essence is Love, — never, that is, until the coming of Christ, who first enunciated the idea that God is love, — rejoicing over the saving of man, far and above all human passions. ‘Vengeance is mine’ was the original idea of Jehovah; and He was feared and worshiped by the Jews as their peculiar God, whose chosen people they were. As for his unity, whatever may have been the popular superstitions of the Greeks and Romans, God is recognized by the greatest and purest minds as one and indivisible, the Father of all, who commands all, who creates all, who is invisible and omnipotent. Do you not remember

the fragment of the Sibylline verses preserved by Lactantius,¹ S. Theophilus Antiochenus, and S. Justinus, where it is said that Zeus was one being alone, self-creating, from whom all things are made, who beholds all mortals, but whom no mortal can behold? —

Εἷς δ' ἔστ' αὐτογενής· ἐνὸς ἔκγονα πάντα τέτυκται,
'Εν δ' αὐτοῖς αὐτὸς περιγίγνεται· οὐδέ τις αὐτὸν
Εἰσורάζ' θνητῶν, αὐτὸς δέ γε πάντας ἑρᾶται.

So, also, Pindar cries out: —

‘Τί Θεός;’ τί τὸ πᾶν.

So again, in the same spirit, the Appian hymn says of Zeus: —

*Εν κράτος, εἷς δαίμων γένετο μέγας οὐρανὸν αἶθρων
*Εν δὲ τὰ πάντα τέτυκται· ἐν ᾧ τὰδε πάντα κυκλείται.

And Euripides exclaims, ‘Where is the house, the fabric reared by man, that could contain the immensity of God?’

Ποῖος δ' ἂν οἶκος, τεκτόνων πλασθεὶς ὑπὸ
Δέμας, τὸ Θεῖον περιβάλλοι τοίχων πρυχαῖς,

and adds that the true God needs no sacrifices on his altar. And Æschylus, in like manner, says: —

Ζεὺς ἐστὶν αἰθὴρ, Ζεὺς δὲ γῆ. Ζεὺς δ' οὐρανός,
Ζεὺς τοι τὰ πάντα, χῶτι τῶν δ' ὑπέρτερον.

And Sophocles, also in similar lines, proclaims the unity and universality of God. And Theocritus, in his ‘Idylls,’ echoes the same sentiment. The same cast of thought, the same lofty idea of God,

¹ See *Divin. Inst.*, lib. i. c. 6.

is found among the ancient Romans. Lucan exclaims in his 'Pharsalia : ' —

'Jupiter est quod cumque vides, quo cumque moveris.'

Valerius Soranus makes him the one universal, omnipotent God, the Father and Mother of us all : —

'Jupiter omnipotens, regum rerumque deumque
Progenitor genetrisque deum deus unus et omnes.' ¹

Can any statement be larger and more inclusive than this ? ² Such indeed was the true philosophic idea of Jupiter, as entertained by the best and most exalted in ancient days. You must go to the highest sources to learn what the highest notions of Deity are among any people, and not grope among the popular superstitions and myths. Then, again, what nobler expressions of our relation to an infinite and universal spirit of God are to be found than in Epictetus and Seneca ? 'God is near you, is with you, is within you,' Seneca writes. 'A sacred spirit dwells within us, the observer and guardian of all our evil and all our good. There is no good man without God.' And again : 'Even from a corner it is possible to spring up into heaven. Rise, therefore, and form

¹ Val. Soranus, cited by St. Augustine, *De Civit. Dei*, lib. vii. c. 9.

² See these passages and others cited in S. Justinus, *Cohortat. ad Græc. et de Monarchia* ; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromat.*, lib. v., *et Admonitio ad Gentes* ; S. Cyrillus Alexandrinus, *Contra Julianum*, lib. i. ; Athenagoras, *Legat. pro Christian.* ; Theodoretus, *Graec. Affectionum : Curat*, lib. 7.

thysself into a fashion worthy of God.' And again: 'It is no advantage that conscience is shut up within us. We lie open to God.' And still again: 'Do you wish to render the gods propitious? Be virtuous.' One might cite such passages for hours from the writings of these men. Can you, then, think that our notions of God and duty were so low and so debased?

"Look, too, at our arts. Art and religion with us and the Greeks went hand in hand. If you seek the true spirit of religion among any people, you will always find it in the productions of their art. In sculpture, the most ideal of the plastic arts, you will see the real features of the gods. They are grand, calm, serene, dignified, and above the taint of human passion; claiming reverence and love in their beauty and perfection beyond the human. Here there is nothing mean or low. So godlike are they even in the poorer specimens of their noble figures that have come down to you, that you yourselves recognize in them ideal grace and power. Read the reflection of our faith in their forms and features, and you will find in it nothing vulgar, nothing degrading. The best personifications of your own divinities in art look poor beside them. God himself in your pictures is feeble compared with the divine Jupiter of Phidias; the Madonna weak and tame beside the august grandeur of his Athene. Christ in your art is pitiable beside the splendor of Apollo; so far from being the highest type of even man, he

is almost the weakest, composed of pale negatives, and with nothing very positive and grand; while your saints are affected, eowardly, and eringing, compared with the heroic demigods of Greeee. In art, at least, the ancient deities still live and command reverence from a serene world beyond change. Would you know what our faith was, look at the great works of art and at the best thoughts of the greatest minds we owned, and not at the corrupted text of popular superstition. These, indeed, were worthy of reverence. They lifted the thoughts and cleared the spirit, and filled it with a sense of beauty and of power. Who could look at that magnificent impersonation of Zeus at Olympia, by Phidias, so grand, so simple, so serene, with its golden robes and hair, its divine expression of power and sweetness, its immense proportions, its perfection of workmanship, and not feel that they were in the presence of an august, tremendous, and impassionate power?"

"Ah!" I exclaimed, "that truly I wish I could have seen — what majesty, what beauty, it must have had!"

"Ay!" he answered. "No one could see it and not be enlarged in spirit by it."

"Was, then, the Athena of the Parthenon," I asked, "equal in merit?"

"It was very different. It wanted the power and massive grandeur of the Zeus; but in its dignity and serenity it had a wondrous charm. It

was the true type of wisdom, calm above doubt, and with a gentle severity of aspect, as if, undisturbed by the tormenting questions that vex humanity, it saw the eternal truth of things. When I compare with these wondrous statues your best representations of your divinities, I cannot but feel how vast a difference there is; and when in your temples one sees the prostrate figures of men and women clinging to vulgar and degraded images of saints, imploring aid and protection from them, and soliciting their interposition against the avenging hand of Deity, I cannot see that you are better than we."

"But, after all, through this there is a belief in a pure and infinite Being beyond — a Being beyond all human passion; not imperfect and subject to wild caprices, and capable of abominable acts."

"You see, we go back to the same question," he replied. "You profess to worship a God above nature, and yet your prayers are to Christ, the man; to the saints, who were lower men and women; and you cling to these as mediators. Well; and we also believed in a spirit and power undefined and above all, whose nature we could not grasp, and who expressed himself in every living thing. Our gods were but anthropomorphic symbols of special powers and developments of an infinite and overruling power. They partly represent, in outward shape and form, philosophic ideas and human notions about the infinite God,

and partly body forth the phenomena of nature, that hint at the great ultimate cause behind them, of which they are, so to speak, the outward garment, by which the Universal Deity is made visible to man. In our religion nature was but the veil which half hid the divine powers. Everywhere they peered out upon us, from grove and river, from night and morning, from lightning and storm, from all the elements and all the changes and mysteries of the living universe. It delighted us to feel their absolute, active presence among us—not far away from us, involved in utter obscurity, and beyond our comprehension. We saw the Great Cause in its second plane, close to us, in the growing of the flower, in the flowing of the stream, in the drifting of the cloud, in the rising and setting of the sun. Our gods (representing the great idea beyond, and doing its work) were anthropomorphic by necessity, just as yours are in art. The popular fables are but the mythical garb behind which lie great facts and truths. They are symbolical representations of the great processes of nature, of the laws of life and growth, of the changes of the seasons, of the strife of the elements. Apollo was the life-giving sun; Artemis, the mysterious moon; Ceres and Proserpine, the burial of the grain in the earth, and its reappearance and fructification. So, on another plane, Minerva was the philosophic mind of man; Venus, the impassioned embodiment of human love, as Eros was of spiritual affections; Bacchus,

the serene and full enjoyment of nature. We but divided philosophically what you sum up in one final cause; but all our divisions looked back to that cause. In an imaginative people like the Greeks, there is also a natural tendency to mythical embodiment of facts in history as well as in nature; and in the early periods, when little was written down, traditions easily assumed the myth form. Ideas were reduced to visible shapes, and facts were etherealized into ideas and imaginatively transformed. The story of Diana and Endymion, of Cupid and Psyche, will always be true — not to the reason, but to the imagination. It expresses poetically a sentiment which cannot die. So, also, what matters it if Dædalus built a ship for Icarus, and Icarus was simply drowned? Sublimed into poetry, it became a myth, and Icarus flew on waxen wings across the sea. All poetry is thus allegorical. The wind will always have wings until it ceases to blow. These myths are simply poetic moulds of thought, in which vague sentiments, ideas, and facts are wrought together into an express shape. Think what your own literature or thought would be without the old Grecian poems. Let the reason reject them as it will, and drive them out into the cold, the imagination will run forth and bring them back again to warm and cherish them on its breast. Facts, as facts, are but dead husks. The spirit cannot live upon them. Besides, are not our myths enchanting? Could anything take their place? Can science,

peering into all things, ever find the secrets of nature? After all its explorations, the final element of life, the motive and inspiring element that is the essence of all the organism it uses and without which all is mere material, mere machinery, flees utterly beyond its reach, and leaves it at last with only dust in its hands. Does not the little child that makes playmates of the flowers, and the brooks, and the sands, find God there better than any of us? The subtle divinity hides anywhere, entices everywhere, is just out of reach everywhere. We catch glimpses of it, breathe its odor, hear its dim voice, see the last flutter of its robe, pursue it endlessly, and never can seize it. The poet is poet because he loves this spirit in nature, and comes nearer it; but he cannot grasp it; and for all his pursuit he comes back laden at last with a secret he cannot quite tell, and shapes us a myth to express it as well as he may."

"But surely," I answered, "we should distinguish between mere poetry and fact—between science and fancy. So long as we admit the unreality of merely fanciful creations and explanations of facts, we may be pleased with them; but let us not be misled by them into a belief of their scientific truth."

"Ah, 't is the old story! The little child has a bit of wood, which to her, in the free play of her imagination, is a person with good and bad qualities, who acts well or ill, whom she loves or

despises. She whips it ; she caresses it ; she scolds it ; she sends it to school or to bed ; she forgives it and fondles it. All is real to the child ; more real, perhaps, than to the nurse who stands beside her and laughs at her, and says, ‘ How silly ! come away ! it is only a stick ! ’ Which is right ? The Greeks were the child, and you are the nurse. What is truth, which is always on our lips — truth of history, truth of science, truth of any kind ? Who knows — history ? Two persons standing together see the same occurrence ; is it the same to both ? Far from it. The literal friend is amazed to hear what the imaginative friend saw. Yet both may be right in their report, only one saw what the other had no senses to perceive. We only see and feel according to our natures. What we are modifies what we see. Out of the camomile flower the physician makes a decoction, and the poet a song. History is but a dried herbarium of withered facts, unless the imagination interpret them. I cannot but smile at what is called history ; and of all history, that of our own Roman world seems the strangest, because, perhaps, I know it best.”

“ Ah ! ” I broke in, “ how one wishes you had written us familiar memoirs of your time, and given us some intimate insight into your life, your thoughts, your daily doings. We have so to grope about in the dark for any knowledge of you. And then, in the history of art, what dreadful blanks ! I do not feel assured, except from your ‘ Medita-

tions,' as we call them, and your letters, that we really know anything accurately about you. About the Thundering Legion, for instance, — what is the truth?"

"There," he answered, "is an instance of the ease with which a fable is made, and how a simple fact may be tortured into an untruth merely to suit a purpose. When I was on my campaign against the Quadi, in the year 174, the incident to which you refer happened. The spring had been cold and late, and suddenly the heats of summer overtook us in the enemy's country. After a long and difficult march on a very hot day, we suddenly came upon the enemy, who, descending from the mountains, attacked us, overcome with fatigue, in the plains. The battle went against us for some time, for my army suffered so from thirst and heat and exhaustion that they were unable to repel the attack, and were forced back. While they were in full retreat and confusion, suddenly the sky became clouded over, and a drenching shower poured upon us. My men, who were dying of thirst, stopped fighting, took off their helmets and reversed their shields to catch the rain, and while they were thus engaged the enemy renewed their assault with double fury. All seemed lost, when suddenly, as sometimes occurs among the mountains, a fierce wind swept down with terrible peals of thunder and vivid flashes of lightning; the rain changed into hail, which was blown and driven with such a fury into the faces of the enemy that

they were confounded and confused, and began in their turn to fall back. My own men, having the storm only on their backs, refreshed by the rain they had drunken from their shields and helmets, and cooled by their bath, now anew attacked, and, pouring upon their foe with fury, cut them to pieces. Among my soldiers at this time there was an old legion, organized in the time of Augustus, named the *Fulminata*, from the fact that they bore on their shields a thunderbolt; upon this simple fact was founded the story, repeated by many early writers in the Christian Church, that this legion was composed of Christians only, that the storm was a miraculous interposition of their God in answer to their prayer, and that they then received the name of *Fulminata*, in commemoration of this miracle. This is the simple truth of the case. My men said that Jupiter Pluvius came to their aid, and they sacrificed to him in gratitude; and on the column afterwards dedicated to me by the Senate in commemoration of my services, you will see the sculptured figure of Jupiter Pluvius, from whose beard, arms, and head the water is streaming to refresh my soldiers, while his thunderbolts are flashing against the barbarians."

As he spoke these words, a flash of lightning, so intense as to blind the lamps, gleamed through the room, followed by a startling peal of thunder, which seemed to shake not only the house but the sky above us.

He smiled and said, "We should have said in

older time that Jupiter affirmed the truth of my statement; but you are above such puerilities, I suppose."

"Certainly I should not say it was a sign from Jupiter. The thunder was on the left, and that was considered by you a good omen, was it not?"

'Et cœli genitor de parte serena
Intonuit lævum.'

"This thunder on the left was considered a good omen. But what was it you said after you asked the question? You seemed to be making a quotation in a strange tongue—at least a tongue I never heard."

"That was Latin," I answered, blushing a little, "and from Virgil—Virgilius, perhaps I ought to say, or perhaps Maro."

"Ah! Latin, was it?" he said. "I beg your pardon; I thought it might have been a charm to avert the Evil Eye that you were uttering."

"As difficult to understand as the Eleusinian mysteries," I said. "And, by the way, what were the Eleusinian mysteries?"

"They were mysteries! I can merely say to you that they concealed under formal rites the worship of the spirit of nature, as symbolized in Demeter and Persephone and Dionysos. In their purest and hidden meaning, they represented the transformation, purification, and resurrection of humanity in a new form and in another existence. But I am not at liberty to say more than this. The outward rites were for the multitude, the

inner meaning for the highest and most developed minds. Were it permitted to me to explain them to you, I think you would not take so low a view of our religious philosophy as you now seem to have. What you hear and read of was merely the outward and mystical drama, with its lustrations and fasting, and cakes of sesame and honey, and processions — as symbolical in its way as your mass and baptism, and having as pure a significance.

“But,” he continued, “to revert to the questions which we were previously discussing. It seems to me that in certain respects your faith is not even so satisfactory as ours; for its tendency is to degrade the present in view of the future, and to debase humanity in its own view. With us life was not considered disgraceful, nor man a mean and contemptible creature. We did not systematically humiliate ourselves and cringe before the divine powers, but strove to stand erect, and not to forget that we were made by God after his own image. We did not affect that false humility which in the view of the ancient philosophers was contemptible — nay, even we thought that the pride of humility was of all the most despicable. We sought to keep ourselves just, obedient to our best instincts, temperate and simple, looking upon life as a noble gift of the gods, to be used for noble purposes. We believed, beside this, that virtue should be practiced for itself, and not through any hope of reward or any fear of pun-

ishment here or hereafter. To act up to our highest idea of what was right was our principle, not out of terror or in the hope of conciliating God, but because it was right ; and to look calmly on death, not as an evil, but as a step onward to another existence. To desire nothing too much ; to hold one's self equal to any fate ; to keep one's self in harmony with nature and with one's own nature ; calmly to endure what is inevitable, steadily to abstain from all that is wrong ; to remember that there is no such thing as misfortune to the brave and wise, but only phantasms that falsely assume these shapes to shake the mind ; that when what we wish does not happen, we should wish what does happen ; that God hath given us courage, magnanimity, and fortitude, so that we may stand up against invasions of evil and bear misfortune, — such were our principles, and they enabled us to live heroic lives, vindicating the nobility of human nature, and not despising it as base and lost ; believing in the justice of God and not in his caprice and enmity to any of us, and having no ignoble fear of the future."

"But are not these principles for the most part ours?" I answered. "Do we not believe that virtue is the grand duty of man? Do none of us seek to live heroic lives, and sacrifice ourselves to do good to the world and to our brothers?"

"Certainly, you lead heroic lives ; but your great principle is humility — your great motive, reward or fear. You profess to look on this life

as mean and miserable, and on yourselves as creatures of the dust ; and you declare that you have no claim to be saved from eternal damnation by leading a just life, but only by a capricious election hereafter. You profess that your God is a God of love, and you attribute to Him enmity and injustice of which you yourself would be ashamed. You think you are to be saved because Christ died on the cross for you, and you are not sure of it even then. But with us every one deserved to be tried on his own merits, and to expiate his own errors and crimes."

"It is supposed by some that you were half a Christian yourself. Is this so?"

"If you mean that I revered the life and doctrines of Christ, and saw in Him a pure man, I certainly did. But in my principles I was a Stoic purely, and it is only as a philosopher that I admired the character of Christ. You think the principles He preached were new ; they were really as old as the world, almost. His life was blameless, and He sacrificed his life for his principles ; and for this I reverence Him, but no further. His followers, however, were far less pure and self-denying, and they sought power and endeavored to overthrow the state."

"Was it for this you persecuted them?" I said.

"I did not persecute them," he answered. "As Christians they were perfectly free in Rome. All religions were free, and all admitted. No one was

interfered with merely for his religious belief and worship, whether it were that of Isis, of Mithras, of Jehovah, or of any other deity. It was only when the Christians endeavored to attain to power and provoke disturbance in the state, to abuse authority and set at defiance the laws, that it became necessary — or at all events was considered necessary — to stop them. When they were not content with worshipping according to their own creed, but aggressively denounced the popular worship as damnable, and sought to cast public contempt on all gods but their own, they outraged the public sense as much as if any one now should denounce Christ as a vagabond, and seek by abuse to overthrow your church by all sorts of blasphemous language. Nor would it matter in the least in your own time that any person so outraging decency should be absolutely honest in his intentions, and assured in his own mind of the truth of his own doctrines. Suppose one step further, — that any set of men should not only undertake to turn Christ into ridicule publicly, but should also abuse the government and conspire to overthrow the monarchy. You would then have a case similar to that of the Christians in my day. At all events, it was believed that it was a settled plan with them to overthrow the empire, and it was for this that they were, as you call it, persecuted. For my own part, I was sorry for it, deeming in such matters it was better to take no measures so severe ; but I personally had nothing to do with

it. It was the fanatical zeal of the government, who, acting without my commands, took advantage of ancient laws to punish the Christians; and this your own Tertullian will prove to you. They undoubtedly supposed that the Christians were endeavoring to create a political and social revolution, — that they were in fact Communists, as you would now call them, intent upon overthrowing the state. I confess that there was a good deal of color given to such a judgment by the conduct of the Christians. But as for myself, as I said, I was opposed to any movement against them, believing them all to be honest of purpose, though perhaps somewhat excited and fanatical.”

“Why did you think that they were Communists?” I asked. “Had you any sufficient grounds for such a belief?”

“Surely; the most ample grounds in the very teachings of Christ himself. His system was essentially communistic, and nothing else. His followers and disciples were all Communists; they all lived in common, had a common purse, and no one was allowed to own anything. They were ordered by Christ not to labor, but to live from day to day, and take no heed of the future, and lay up nothing, but to sell all they had, and live like the ravens. Christ himself denounced riches constantly — not the wrong use of riches, but the mere possession of them; and said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to inherit the kingdom of

heaven, — not a bad rich man, observe, but any rich man. So, too, his story of Lazarus and Dives turns on the same point. It does not appear that Lazarus was good, but only that he was poor ; nor does it appear that Dives was bad, but only that he was rich ; and when Dives in Hades prays for a drop of water, he is told that he had the good things in his lifetime, and Lazarus the evil things, and that *therefore* he is now tormented, and Lazarus is comforted.”

“But, surely,” I answered, “it was intended to mean that Dives had not used his riches properly?”

“Nothing is said of the kind, or even intimated ; for all that appears, Dives may have been a good man, and Lazarus not. The only apparent virtue of Lazarus is, that he was a beggar ; the only fault of Dives, that he was rich. Do you not remember, also, the rich young man who desired to become one of Christ’s followers, and asked what he should do to be saved ? Christ told him that doing the commandments, and being virtuous and honest, was not enough ; but that he must sell all that he had, and give it to the poor, and then he could follow Him, and not otherwise ; and the rich good man was very sorrowful, and went away. What does all this mean but Communism ? Yes ; the system He would carry out was community of goods, and He would permit no one to have possessions of his own. This struck at the roots of all established law and rights of property, and

naturally made his sect feared and hated among certain classes in Rome."

"I am astonished," I said, "to find that you have so carefully studied the records of the teachings and doctrines of Christ."

"Is it not the duty of any man," he answered, "especially of one in a responsible position, carefully to consider the arguments and doctrines of all who are sincere and earnest in their convictions, and, however averse they may be from our preconceived opinions, to weigh them, as far as possible, calmly, and without prejudice, and see what they really are and what truth there may be in them? and was not this peculiarly incumbent on me in the case of so noble and spiritual a teacher as Christ? Was it not my duty to endeavor, as far as in me lay, first to recognize the great principles of his teaching, and then in their light to examine and weigh his very words as far as they are authentically reported to us by his followers? It is this fixed notion, from which we cannot easily free ourselves, that we in our own views alone can be right, that shuts up the mind and encrusts our faith with superstitions. We at our best are merely men, subject to errors, short-sighted, fixed in prejudices, and seeing but a part of anything. No system of religion ever embraced all truth; no system is without gleams of it; all recognize a higher power above us and beyond our comprehension; and nothing is more unbecoming than to scorn what we have not even striven to under-

stand, or to shut our ears and our minds to any doctrine or faith which is earnestly, seriously propounded and accepted by others. Unfortunately, it is this narrow-mindedness and arrogance of opinion which has always impeded the growth and development of truth. There is nothing so bitter as religious controversy, — nothing which has so petrified our intelligence or has begotten such crimes and such persecutions. Therefore it was that I deemed it my duty to study and endeavor to understand the doctrine and belief of all sincere minds, whether of those who worshiped Jehovah or Zeus, Mithras or Christ, and not to reject them as wicked or erroneous simply because they were averse from the faith in which I had been educated. Will you excuse me if I say that what amazes me in regard to the Christian faith is, that while it is claimed that Christ is God, and therefore to be implicitly obeyed in all his commands, so little intelligence is shown in studying those commands, and such willful perversion in avoiding them even when they are plainly enunciated ; and again, that while claiming that love and forgiveness are the very cornerstone of your faith, you Christians none the less not only accept war and battle as arbitraments of right, but in the name of your great founder, — nay, of your very God, — have endeavored at times to enforce those doctrines by the most hideous of crimes, and by wholesale slaughter of those who differed from you in minor particulars

of faith; and still more, do constantly even now exhibit such narrow-minded adherence to mere words and texts, without consideration of the great principles which underlie them and in the light of which surely they are to be interpreted. You are all Christians now, in Rome. You profess absolute faith in the teaching of Christ. You profess to consider his life as the great exemplar for all men. Do you follow it? Do you, for instance, think it in accordance with his teaching or his example to devote your lives selfishly to the laying up of riches for your own individual luxuries, to clothe yourselves in purple and fine linen, to make broad your phylacteries, or to use vain repetitions in your prayers as the heathen do, standing in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets, and to play the part of Dives while Lazarus is starving at your gates? Are you any better than we heathens, as you call us, in all this? Do you think Christ would have done thus, or smiled approval on all you do in his name? Ah! you say, it would be impossible for us strictly to carry out this system of Christ. It is beautiful, but ideal, and for us, in the present state of the world, absolutely impracticable. But have you ever tried it? Have you ever even sought to try it, and to hold a common purse for the interest of all?"

I had to bow my head, and admit that in that high sense we are not Christians. "But," I said, "to follow exactly all these commands, to carry

out all these doctrines, even to imitate his example as set before us in his life, would be to revolutionize the world."

"But does not the world need revolutionizing," he said, "according to your own principles?"

"We do what we can, at least we endeavor to do so, as far as we are able."

"Are you sure even of that?" he replied. "Are you sure it is not mammon that you really worship, and not Christ? But I will say no more. You are but mortal men as we were; and man is fallible and weak, and our knowledge is but half-knowledge at best, and our love and faith have but feeble wings to lift us above the earth on which we dwell. Look upon us, therefore, as you would be looked upon yourselves, and be not too stern on our shortcomings. We had our vices and faults and deficiencies as you have yours, but we had also our virtues, and were on the whole as high of purpose, as self-sacrificing, as pure even as you; but man neither then nor now has led an ideal life.

"But to return to what we were saying about our treatment of Christians. Let me add in my own justification that I for myself never had any hand in persecutions, either of Christians or of others, nor was I ever aware that they were persecuted. I knew that persons who happened to be Christians were punished for political offenses; and that was all, I think, that happened. Believe me, my soul was averse from all such things, nor

would I ever allow even my enemies to be persecuted, much less those who merely differed from me on moral and philosophical theses. Nay, I may say they differed little from me even on these points, as you may well see if you read my letters on the subject of the proper treatment of one's enemies, written to Lucius Verus, or if you will refer to that little diary of mine in Pannonia, wherein I was not so base as to lie to myself."

"Indeed," I cried; "that book is a precious record of the purest and highest morality."

"'T is a poor thing," he answered, "but sincere. I strove to act up to my best principles; but life is difficult, and man is not wise, and our opinions are often incorrect. Still, I strove to act according to my nature; to do the things which were fit for me, and not to be diverted from them by fear of any blame; to keep the divine part in me tranquil and content; and to look upon death and life, honor and dishonor, pain and pleasure, as neither good nor evil in themselves, but only in the way in which we receive them. For fame I sought not; for what is fame but a smoke that vanishes, a river that runs dry, a lamp that soon is extinguished — a tale of a day, and scarcely even so much? Therefore, it benefits us not deeply to consider it, but to pass on through the little space assigned to us conformably to nature, and in content, and to leave it at last grateful for what we have received, just as an olive falls off when it is ripe, blessing nature which produced it, and thanking the tree on which

it grew. So, also, it is our duty not to defile the divinity in our breast, but to follow it tranquilly and obediently as a god, saying nothing contrary to truth, and doing nothing contrary to justice. For our opinions are but running streams, flowing in various ways; but truth and justice are ever the same, and permanent, and our opinions break about them as the waves round a rock, while they stand firm forever. For every accident of life there is a corresponding virtue to exercise; and if we consult the divine within us, we know what it is. As we cannot avoid the inevitable, we should accept it without murmuring; for we cannot struggle against the gods without injuring ourselves. For the good we do to others, we have our immediate reward; for the evil that others do to us, if we cease to think of it, there is no evil to us. It is by accepting an offense, and entertaining it in our thoughts, that we increase it, and render ourselves unhappy, and veil our reason, and disturb our senses. As for our life, it should be given to proper objects, or it will not be decent in itself; for a man is the same in quality as the object that engages his thoughts. Our whole nature takes the color of our thoughts and actions. We should also be careful to keep ourselves from rash and premature judgments about men and things; for often a seeming wrong done to us is a wrong only through our misapprehension, and arising from our fault. And so, making life as honest as possible and calmly doing our duty in the present, as the

hour and the act require, and not too curiously considering the future beyond us, standing ever erect, and believing that the gods are just, we may make our passage through this life no dishonor to the Power that placed us here. Throughout the early portion of my life, my father, Antoninus Pius, — I call him my father, for he was ever dear to me, and was like a father, — taught me to be laborious and assiduous, to be serene and just, to be sober and kind, to be brave and without envy or vanity; and on his death-bed, when he felt the shadow coming over him, he ordered the captain of the guard to transfer to me the golden statuette of Fortune, and gave him his last watchword of ‘Equanimity.’ From that day to the day when, in my turn, I left the cares of empire and of life, I ever kept that watchword in my heart — equanimity; nor do I know a better one for any man.”

“Oh, tell me, for you know,” I cried, “what is there behind this dark veil which we call death? You have told me of your opinions and thoughts and principles of life, here; but of that life hereafter you have not said a word. What is it?”

There was a blank silence. I looked up — the chair was empty! That noble figure was no longer there.

“Fool that I was!” I cried; “why did I discuss with him these narrow questions belonging to life and history, and leave that stupendous question unasked which torments us all, and of which he could have given the solution?”

I rose from my chair, and after walking up and down the room several minutes, with the influence of him who had left me still filling my being as a refined and delicate odor, I went to the window, pushed wide the curtains, and looked out upon the night. The clouds were broken, and through a rift of deep, intense blue, the moon was looking out on the earth. Far away, the heavy and ragged storm was hovering over the mountains, sullen and black, and I recalled the words of St. Paul to the Romans : —

“When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves ;” and “the doers of the law shall be justified.”

DISTORTIONS OF THE ENGLISH STAGE AS INSTANCED IN "MACBETH."

ART is art because it is not nature, is the motto of the Idealisti; Art is but the imitation of nature, say the Naturalisti. The truth lies between the two. Art is neither nature alone, nor can it do without nature. No imitation, however accurate, for imitation's sake makes a good work of art in any other than a mechanical sense. And every work of art in which the objects represented are inaccurately or imperfectly imitated is in so far deficient. But art works by suggestion as well as by imitation. Whatever is untrue to the imagination fails to produce its proper effect, however true it be to the fact. The most absolute realism will not answer the higher demand of the imagination for ideal truth. Art is not simply the reproduction of nature, but nature as modified and colored by the spirit of the artist. It is a crystallization out of nature of all elements and facts related by affinity to the idea intended to be embodied. These solely it should eliminate and draw to itself, leaving the rest as unessential. A literal adherence to all the accidents of nature is not only not necessary in art, but may even be fatal. The enumeration of all the leaves in a tree does

not reproduce a tree to the imagination, while a whole landscape may be compressed into a single verse.

Between the ideal and the natural school there is a perpetual struggle. Under the purely ideal treatment art becomes vague and insipid; under the purely natural treatment it becomes literal and prosaic. The Pre-Raphaelites, in protesting against weak sentimentalism and vague generalization, and demanding an honest study of nature, have fallen into the error of exaggerating the importance of minute detail, and, by insisting too strongly on literal truth, have sometimes lost sight of that ideal truth which is of higher worth. But their work was needed, and it has been bravely done. They have roused the age out of that dull conventionalism in which it had fallen asleep. They have stimulated thought, revived sentiment, and reasserted with word and deed the necessity of nature as a true basis of art.

As in the arts of painting and sculpture, so in the drama and on the stage a strong reaction is taking place against the stilted conventionalism and elaborate artifice of the last generation. Such plays as the "Nina Sforza" of Mr. Troughton, the "Legend of Florence" of Mr. Leigh Hunt, and the "Blot in the 'Scutcheon" and "Colombe's Birthday" of Mr. Browning, are vigorous protests against the feeble pretensions and artificial tragedies of the previous century. The poems and plays of Mr. Browning breathe a new life; and if as yet

they have only found "fit audience though few," they are stimulating the best thought of this age, and slowly infusing a new life and spirit into it.

But the traditions of the stage are very strong in England, and are not easily to be rooted out. The English public has become accustomed to certain traditional and conventional modes of acting, which interfere with the freedom of the actor, and cramp his genius within artificial forms. There is almost no attempt on the English stage to represent life as it really is. Tradition and convention stand in the stead of nature. From the moment an actor puts his foot on the stage he is taught to mouth and declaim. He studies rather to make telling points than to give a consistent whole to the character he represents. His utterance and action are false and "stagey." In quiet scenes he is pompous and stilted; in tragic scenes, ranting and violent. He never forgets his audience, but, standing before the footlights, constantly addresses himself to them as if they were personages in the play. Habit at last becomes a second nature; his taste becomes corrupted, and he ceases to strive to be simple and natural. There is, in a word, no defect against which Hamlet warns the actor which is not a characteristic feature of English acting. It never "holds the mirror up to nature," but is always "overdone," without "temperance," full of mouthing, strutting, bellowing, and noise. It "tears a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings." And

“there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, having neither the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor Turk, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature’s journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably ;” and this needs to be reformed altogether.

These words of Shakespeare show that even in his time the inflated, pompous, and artificial style still in vogue on the English stage was a national characteristic. We have scarcely improved, since old traditions cling and hold the stage in mortmain. Reform moves slowly everywhere in England ; but the two institutions which oppose to it the most obstinate resistance are the church and the theatre. In both of these tradition stands for nearly as much as revelation. Each adheres to its old forms, as if they contained its true essence ; each believes that those forms once broken, the whole spirit would be lost ; just as if they were phials which contained a precious liquid, and must be therefore preserved at all costs. The idea that the liquid can be quite as well, and perhaps better, kept in different phials has never occurred to them. They will die for the phial.

Still it is plain that a strong reaction against this bigoted admiration of traditional and conventional forms is now perceptible. The facilities of travel and intercourse with other nations have

engendered new notions and modified old ones. It is impossible to compare the French and Italian stage with the English, and not perceive the vast inferiority of the latter. In the one we see nature, simplicity, and life; in the other, the galvanism of artificial convention. It cannot be denied that the recent acting of Hamlet by Fechter was to the English mind a daring and doubtful innovation. It was something so utterly different in spirit and style from that to which we have been accustomed that it created a sensation; and while it found many ardent admirers, it found quite as many vehement opposers. The public ranged themselves in two parties; the one insisting that the traditional and artificial school, as represented by Garrick, the elder Kean, and Cooke, was the only safe guide for the tragic actor; and the other arguing that as the true function of the stage was to hold up the mirror to nature, acting should be as much like life and as little like acting as possible. The former, at the head of which were the friends of Mr. Charles Kean, made a public demonstration in his behalf, and scouted these new-fangled French notions of acting. Was it to be supposed that any school of acting could be superior to that created and established in England by the genius of such actors as Garrick, the elder Kean, and Cooke? Should foreigners presume to teach us how to interpret and represent plays which had been the study of the English people for centuries? To this it was opposed that, how-

ever mortifying to us, it was a fact that the Germans had led the way to a profounder and more metaphysical study of Shakespeare, and had taught us in many ways how to understand his plays, and that therefore there was no reason why foreigners might not teach us how to act them. The very fact that their eyes were not blinded, nor their tongues tied by traditional conventions, enabled them to study Shakespeare with more freedom and directness. There was no deep rut of ancient usage out of which they were forced to wrench themselves. And, besides, it was affirmed, and with truth, that the English stage is the jeer of the world, and needs thorough reform.

We have indeed made little progress in reforming the stage. Mr. Charles Kean has devoted his talents to improving the wardrobe and scenery, and has so far done good service; but in the essential matter of acting we are nearly where we were in the past century. While the background and dresses are reformed, and the bag-wig in which Garrick played Hamlet is thrown aside, we have carefully preserved all the old points, all the stage-tricks, and all the stilted intonations of the artificial school; and the consequence is, that the sole reality is in that which is the least essential. The attention is thus withdrawn from the actor to the scenery, and we have a spectacle instead of a tragedy. The background is real, but the actor is conventional; the blanket has usurped the prominent place, and Shakespeare has retired behind it.

The bursts of genius with which Garrick startled the house, and made the audience forget his bag-wig, are wanting, but all his tricks are preserved; the corpse is still there, but the spirit he put into it is gone.

In comedy there is as little resemblance to real life as in tragedy; humor and wit are travestied by buffoonery and grimace. Instead of pictures of life as it is, we have grotesque daubs and caricatures, so exaggerated and farcical in their character as to "make the judicious grieve." The actor and the audience react upon each other. The audience are generally uneducated, and for the most part agree with Partridge in his comment on "Hamlet:" "Give me the king for my money," says he. The actors must bow to this low taste,—

"For they who live to please must please to live."

But tradition has worse sins to answer for. It has not only ruined our national acting, but in some cases has overshadowed the drama itself, and perverted the meaning of some of the greatest plays of Shakespeare. Hamlet is not Hamlet on the English stage; he is the tall, imposing figure of John Kemble; dark, melodramatic, and dressed in black velvet. Strive as we will, we cannot imagine him as the light-haired Dane, easy and dreamy of temperament, "fat and scant of breath," essentially metaphysical, hating physical action, and wanting energy to put his thoughts into deeds. The whole spirit of the acted Hamlet is southern;

that of the real Hamlet is purely northern. We have indeed broken through an old tradition, according to which, incredible as it may seem, Shylock used to be acted as a comic character, though we are still far from a real understanding of his character. But of all the plays of Shakespeare none is so grossly misunderstood as "*Macbeth*." Nor is this misapprehension confined to the stage; it prevails even among those who have zealously studied and admired Shakespeare. As John Kemble stands for Hamlet in our imaginations, so does Mrs. Siddons for Lady Macbeth. She has completely transformed this wonderful creation of Shakespeare's, distorted its true features, and so stamped upon it her own individuality, that when we think of one we have the figure of the other in our minds. The Lady Macbeth of Mrs. Siddons is the only Lady Macbeth we know and believe in. She is the imperious, wicked, cruel wife of Macbeth, urging on her weak and kind-hearted husband to abominable crimes solely to gratify her own ambitious and evil nature. She is without heart, tenderness, or remorse. Devilish in character, violent in purpose, she is the soul of the whole play; the plotter and instigator of all its horrors; a fiend-like creature, who, having a complete mastery over Macbeth, works him to madness by her taunts, and relentlessly drives him on against his will to the commission of his terrible crimes. We hate her, as we pity Macbeth. He is weak of purpose, amiable of disposition, "full

of the milk of human kindness," an unwilling instrument of all her evil designs, who, wanting force of will and strength of character, yields reluctantly to her infernal temptations.

Nothing could more clearly prove the great genius of Mrs. Siddons, than that she has been able so to stamp upon the public mind this amazing misconception, that, despite all the careful study which of late years has been given to Shakespeare, this notion of the character of Lady Macbeth and Macbeth should still prevail. Yet so deeply is it rooted, and so universal, that whoever attempts to eradicate it will find his task most difficult. But, believing it to be an utter distortion of the characters as Shakespeare drew them, and so at variance with the interior thought, conduct, and development of the play as not only entirely to obscure its real meaning, but to obliterate all its finest and most delicate features, we venture to enter upon this difficult task.

Macbeth and his wife, so far from being the characters above described, are their direct opposites. He is the villain; who can never satiate himself with crimes. She, having committed one crime, dies of remorse. She is essentially a woman — acts suddenly and violently, and then breaks down, and wastes her life and thoughts in bitter repentance. He is, on the contrary, essentially a man — who resolves slowly and with calculation, but once determined and entered upon a course of action, obstinately pursues it to the end, haunted

by no remorse for his crimes, and agitated by no regrets and doubts, so long as his wicked plans do not miscarry. The spring of his nature is ambition;¹ and in working out his ends he is cruel, pitiless, and bloody. He is without a single good trait of character; and from the beginning to the end of the play, at every step, he develops deeper abysses of cruelty and inhumanity in his nature. When he is first presented to us, we, in common with Lady Macbeth, are completely unaware of his baseness. He is a thorough hypocrite, and deceives us, as he deceived her. We see that he has a grasping ambition, but we believe that he is amiable and weak of purpose, for so Lady Macbeth tells us; but as the play goes on, his character develops itself, and at last we find that he has neither heart nor tenderness for anybody or anything; that his will is unconquerable; that he is utterly without moral sense, is hopelessly selfish, and wickedly cruel. All he loves is power. His ambition is insatiable. It grows by what it feeds on. The more he has, the more he desires, and he is ready to commit every kind of horror for the sake of attaining his object. He is restrained by no scruples of honor, by no claims of friendship, by no sensitiveness of conscience. He murders his sovereign, from whom he has just received large gifts and honors in his own house; and then instantly

¹ "I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition."

compasses the death of his nearest friend and guest, Banquo. Not content with this, he then seeks the life of Macduff; and, enraged because he has fled, savagely and in cold blood puts the whole of his family to the sword. There is a steady growth of evil in his character from the beginning to the end, or rather a steady development of his evil nature.

Malcolm and Macduff, who at first were his friends and companions, afterwards, when they had learned to "know" him, call him "treacherous" and "devilish." So far from agreeing in the character given of him by Lady Macbeth, they say, —

Macduff. Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
In evil to top Macbeth.

Malcolm. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name."

Yet even they admit that

"This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest."

As he had deceived the world, so he deceived his wife. His bloody and treacherous nature was at first as unknown to her as to his friends. As they thought him "honest," she thought him amiable and infirm of purpose, greatly ambitious, and one who would "wrongly win," but yet kindly of nature. Fiery temptations had not as yet brought out the secret writing of his character. It was with

Macbeth as it was with Nero: their real natures did not exhibit themselves at first; but when once they began to develop, their growth was rapid and terrible. And in each of them there was a vein of madness. Essentially a hypocrite, and secretive by nature, Macbeth had passed for only a brave and stern soldier when he first makes his appearance. Yet even in his fierce Norwegian fight we see a violent and bloody spirit. In the very beginning of the play, one of his soldiers describes him, in his encounter with Macdonald, as one who, —

“Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like Valour’s minion,
Carved out his passage till he faced the slave;
And ne’er shook hands nor bade farewell to him
Till he unseamed him from the nape to the chaps,
And fixed his head upon our battlements.”

This is rather a grim picture, and scarcely corresponds to the character usually assigned to Macbeth. Here is not only no infirmity of purpose, but a stern, unwavering resolution, earving its way through all difficulties and against all opposition. Thus far, however, all his deeds had been loyal and for a lawful purpose. Still within his heart burnt, as he himself says, “black and deep desires,” and only circumstances and opportunities were needed to show that he could be as fierce and bloody in crime as he had shown himself in doing a soldier’s duty. They were already urging him in the very first scene; but, secretive of nature, he kept them out of sight.

“Stars, hide your fires ;
 Let not light see my black and deep desires ;
 The eye wink at the hand ; yet let that be,
 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.”

Thus he cries to himself as he speeds to his wife. The “murder,” which was but an hour before “fantastical,” has now become a fixed resolve.

A nature like this, secretive, false, deceitful, and wicked, which had thus far satisfied itself in a legitimate way, and, having no temptation in his own house, had never shown its real shape there, would naturally not have been understood by his wife. Glimpses she might have of what he was, but not a thorough understanding of him. Blinded by her personal attachment to him, and herself essentially his opposite in character, as we shall see, she would naturally have misinterpreted him. The secretive nature is always a puzzle to the frank nature. Accustomed to go straight to her object, whether good or bad, she was completely deceived by his hypocritical and sentimental pretenses, and supposed his nature to be “full of the milk of human kindness.” But time also opened her eyes, though, perhaps, never, even to the last, did she fully comprehend him. “What thou wouldst highly, that wouldst thou holily,” she would never have said after the murder of the king. But however this may be, that her view of his character is false is proved by the whole play. When did he ever show an iota of kindness? What crime did his conscience or the desire to

act "holily" ever prevent his committing? When did he ever exhibit any want of bloody determination? Infirm of purpose? He was like a tiger in his purposes and in his deeds. The murder of Duncan did not satisfy him. The next morning, he kills the two chamberlains, in cold blood, to gratify his wanton cruelty. It was impossible that they should testify against him — they had been drugged, and he could have had no fear of them. Then immediately he plots the murder of Banquo and Fleance, and all the while hypoeritically conceals his foul purposes even from his wife; and because Maeduff "failed his presence at the tyrant's feast," he determines also to murder him. Foiled of this, he then cruelly and hideously puts to the sword his wife and little children. In all these murders, after the king's, Lady Maebeth not only takes no part, but she is even kept in ignorance of them. She drive him to the commission of his crimes? She does not know of them till they are done. They are plotted and determined upon in secret by Macbeth alone, and carried into execution with a bloody directness and suddenness. He is "bloody, false, deceitful, sudden," — essentially a hypocrite, false in his pretenses, secret in his plotting, loud in his showy talk, but sudden and bloody in his crimes and in his malice.

Thus far, however, we have seen but one side of Maebeth. The other side was its opposite. Bold, ambitious, and treacherous, he was also

equally imaginative and superstitious. In action he feared no man. Brave as he was cruel, and ready to meet anything in the flesh, he was equally visionary of head, a victim of superstitious fears, and a mere coward before the unreal fancies evoked by his imagination. He has the Scottish second-sight, and visions and phantoms shake his soul. Show him twenty armed men who seek his life, he encounters them with a fierce joy. Show him a white sheet on a pole, and tell him it is a ghost, and he trembles abjectly. He conjures up for himself phantoms that "unfix his hair and make his seated heart knock at his ribs;" he is distracted with "horrible imaginings." His excited imagination always plays him false and fills him with momentary and superstitious fears; but these fears never ultimately control his action. They are fumes of the head, and being purely visionary, they are also temporary. They come in moments of excitement, obscure for a time his judgment, and influence his ideas; but having regard solely to things unreal, they vanish with the necessity of action.

These superstitious fears have nothing to do with conscience or morals. He has no morals; there is no indication of a moral sense in any single word of the whole play. The only passage which faintly indicates a sense of right and wrong is when he urges to himself, as reasons why he should not kill Duncan, not only that the king is his kinsman, his king, and his guest, but that he

has borne his faculties so meekly, that his virtues would plead like angels trumpet-tongued against the deep damnation of his taking-off. This, however, is mere talk, and has reference only to the indignation which his murder will excite, not to any sorrow Macbeth has for the crime. His sole doubt is lest he may not succeed; for, as he says, —

“ If the assassination
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
 With his surcease, success; that but this blow
 Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
 But here, upon this bank and shoal of time, —
 We 'd jump the life to come.”

The idea of being restrained from committing this murder by any religious or moral scruples is very far from his thought. Right or wrong, good or bad, have nothing to do with the question; and as for the “life to come,” that is mere folly.

But while his moral sense is dead, his imagination is nervously alive. It engenders visions that terrify him: after the murder is done, he thinks he hears phantom-voices crying, “Sleep no more! Glamis hath murdered sleep; and therefore Cawdor shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more;” and these voices so work upon his superstitious fears, that he is afraid for the moment to return to the chamber, and carry the daggers back and smear the grooms with blood. He is, as Lady Macbeth says, “brainsickly,” and “fears a painted devil.” This is superstition, not remorse — a momentary imaginative fear, not a permanent feel-

ing. In a few minutes he has changed his dress, and calmly makes speeches as if nothing had occurred, — nay, this cold-blooded hypocrite is ready within the hour to commit two new and wanton murders on the chamberlains, and boastfully to refer them to his loyal spirit and loving heart, inflamed by horror at the hideous murder of the king, which he has himself committed.

The same superstitious fear attacks him when he hears that Birnam Wood is moving to Dunsinane Hill; but it does not prevent this creature, so “full of the milk of human kindness,” from striking the messenger, calling him “liar and slave,” and threatening, —

“If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive
Till famine cling thee.”

So, too, when Macduff tells him that he was “not of woman born,” awed for a moment by his superstitious fears, he cries, —

“Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!
. . . I'll not fight with thee.”

At times, under the influence of an over-excitable imagination acting upon a nature thoroughly superstitious, his intellect wavers, and he is subject to sudden aberrations of mind resembling insanity. They are, however, evanescent, and in a moment he recovers his poise, descending through a poetical phase into his real and settled character

of cruelty and wickedness. In the dagger-scene, where he is alone, these three phases are perfectly marked. The visionary dagger "proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain" soon vanishes, then follows the poetic mania, and then the stern resolution of murder. In the banquet-scene, when the ghost of Banquo rises, the poetic interval is less marked, for Macbeth is under the restraint of the company and under the influence of his wife; but scarce has the company gone when his real character returns. He is again forming new resolutions of blood. His mind reverts to Macduff, whose life he threatens. He is bent "to know, by the worst means, the worst;" "strange things I have in head, that will to hand."

This aberration of mind Macbeth has in common with Lear, Hamlet, and Othello. But in Macbeth alone does it take a superstitious shape. The trance of Othello is but a momentary condition, in which his goaded imagination, acting upon an irritated sense of honor, love, and jealousy, obliterates for an instant the real world. Hamlet's aberration, when it is not feigned, as for the most part it is, is but the "sore distraction" of a mind upon which the burden of a great action is fixed, which he is bound either to accept or to reject, but in regard to which he hesitates, not because he lacks decision of character, but solely because he cannot satisfy himself that he has sure grounds for action, and that he is not deceived as to the facts which are the motive of his action;

once satisfied as to the grounds for action, he is decisive and prompt, as is clearly shown in the manner in which he disposes of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz on board the vessel, and in the instant slaying of the king himself, when the evidence of his infamy is clear. But while he is yet undecided and struggling with himself to solve this sad problem of the king's guilt, he rejects all ideas of love as futile and impertinent, and, more than that, doubts whether Ophelia herself is not, unconsciously to herself, made a tool of by the king and queen. Lear, again, is "heart-struck." His madness comes from wounded pride and affection. The ingratitude and cruelty of his daughters shake his mind, and to his excited spirit the very elements become his "pernicious daughters:" "I never gave you kingdoms, called you children." In all except Macbeth, the nature thus driven to madness is noble in itself, moral in its character, and warm in its affections. The aberrations of Macbeth are superstitious, and have nothing to do with the morals or the affections.

Macbeth's imagination is, however, a ruling characteristic of his nature. His brain is always active; and when it does not evoke phantoms, it indulges in fanciful and poetic images. He is a poet, and turns everything into poetry. His utterance is generally excited and high-flown, rarely simple and real, and almost never expresses his true feelings and thoughts. His heart remains cold while his head is on fire. On all occasions

his first impulse is to poetize a little; and having done this, he goes about his work without regard to what he has said. His sayings are one thing; his doings are quite another. Shakespeare makes him rant intentionally, as if to show that in such a character the imagination can and does work entirely independently of real feelings and passions. There is no serious character in all Shakespeare's plays who constantly rants and swells in his speech like Macbeth; and this is plainly to show the complete unreality of all his imaginative bursts. In this he differs from every other person in this play. Yet when he is really in earnest, and has some plain business in hand, he can be direct enough in his speech, as throughout the second interview with the weird sisters, and in the scene with the two murderers whom he sends to kill Banquo and Fleance; or when, enraged at the escape of Fleance, he forgets to be a hypocrite, and his real nature clearly expresses itself in direct words, full of savage resolve. But on all other occasions, when he is not in earnest and intends to deceive, or when his brain is excited, he indulges in sentimental speeches, violent figures of speech, extravagant personifications, and artificial tropes and conceits. Even in the phantom-voices he imagines crying to him over Duncan's body, he cannot help this peculiarity. He curiously hunts out conceits to express sleep. He "murders sleep, the innocent sleep; sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care, the death of each day's life,

sore labor's bath, balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, chief nourisher in life's feast." No wonder that Lady Macbeth, amazed, cries out, "What do you mean?" But he cannot help going on like a mad poet. His language is full of alliteration, fanciful juxtaposition of words, assonance, and jingle. At times, so strong is this habit, he makes poems to himself, and for the moment half believes in them. Only compare, in this connection, the natural, simple pathos of the scene where Macduff hears of the barbarous murder of his wife and children, with the language of Macbeth, when the death of Lady Macbeth is announced to him. Macduff "pulls his hat upon his brows," and gives vent to his agony in the simplest and most direct words. Here the feeling is deep and sincere : —

" All my pretty ones ?

Did you say, all ? — O hell-kite ! — All ?

What, all my pretty chickens, and their dam,

At one fell swoop ?

Mal.

Dispute it like a man.

Macd.

I shall do so ;

But I must also feel it like a man :

I cannot but remember such things were,

And were most precious to me. — Did heaven look on,

And would not take their part ? Sinful Macduff,

They were all struck for thee ! naught that I am,

Not for their own demerits, but for mine,

Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now !

.

O, I could play the woman with my eyes."

But when Macbeth is told of the death of his wife, he makes a little poem, full of alliterations

and conceits. It is an answer to the question, What is life like? What can we say about it now?

“To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
 To the last syllable of recorded time;
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
 Life’s but a walking shadow; a poor player,
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
 And then is heard no more: it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou com’st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.”

Has this any relation to true feeling? Do men of any feeling, whose hearts are touched, fall to improvising poems like this, filled with fanciful images, when great sorrows come upon them? This speech is full of “sound and fury, signifying nothing.” There is no accent from the heart in it. It is elaborate, poetic, cold-blooded. “Life is a candle,” “a poor player,” “a walking shadow,” “a tale told by an idiot.” We have his customary alliterations: “petty paece,” “dusty death,” “day to day;” his love of repeating the same word, “to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,” just as we have “If it were done when ’t is done, then ’t were well it were done quickly;” and his “Sleep no more, Macbeth does murder sleep, — sleep, that knits up,” etc.; “Sleep no more! Glamis hath murdered sleep; and therefore Cawdor shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more.” He cannot

forget himself enough to cease to be ingenious in his phrases. As a poem this speech is striking; as an expression of feeling it is perfectly empty. At the end of it he has quite forgotten the death of his wife; he is only employed in piling up figure after figure to personify life. What renders the unreality of this still more striking is the sudden change which comes over him upon the entrance of the messenger. In an instant he stops short in his poem, and his tone becomes at once decided and harsh; his wife's death has passed utterly out of his mind. When the messenger tells him that Birnam Wood is beginning to move, with a sudden burst of rage he turns upon him, calls him liar and slave, and threatens to hang him alive till famine cling him, if his report prove to be incorrect. This is the real Macbeth. From this time forward he never alludes to Lady Macbeth; but, in a strange condition of superstitious fear and soldierly courage, he calls his men to arms, and goes out crying, —

“Blow, wind! come, wrack!

At least we 'll die with harness on our back.”

And this throughout is the character of Macbeth's utterances. He is not like Tartuffe, a religious hypocrite; he is a poetical and sentimental hypocrite. His phrases and figures of speech have no root in his real life; they are only veneered upon them. “His words fly up, his thoughts remain below.” When he is poetical he is never in earnest. Sometimes his speeches are merely oratorical, and made

from habit and for effect; sometimes they are hypoeritical, and used to conceal his real intentions; and sometimes they are the expressions of an inflamed and diseased imagination stimulated by superstition. But they are generally bombastic and swelling in tone, and are so intended to be. His habit of making speeches and inventing curious conceits is so strong, that he even "unpacks his heart with words" when alone, so as to leave himself free and direct to act. Thus, in one of his famous soliloquies, mark the unreal quality of all the pretended feeling, the mixture of immorality, bombast, and hypoerisy, the assonanees and alliterations, the plays upon words, the extravagant figures, all showing the excitability of the brain and not of the heart:—

"If *it were done* when 't is *done*, then 't *were well*
It were done quickly. If th' assassination
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
 With his *surcease, success*; that but this blow
 Might *be* the *be-all* and the *end-all here*,
 But *here*, upon this bank and shoal of time, —
 We 'd jump the life to come."

Then, after some questions about killing his guest, his kinsman, his king, which would seem honest, but for what comes after and for the utter reckless immorality which has gone before these words, his imagination excites itself, and runs into a wild and extravagant figure which means nothing. Dunean's virtues, he says, —

"Will plead like angels trumpet-tongued against
 The deep damnation of his taking-off."

No sooner does he begin to swell and alliterate again than he goes wild : —

“ And pity, like a *naked new-born babe*,
Striding the blast, or heaven’s cherubin, hors’d
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.”

This is pure rant, and intended to be so. It is the product of an unrestrained imagination which exhausts itself in the utterance. But it neither comes from the heart nor acts upon the heart.

Again, in the soliloquy of the air-drawn dagger, the superstitious, visionary Macbeth, who always projects his fancies into figures and phantoms, after addressing this

“ false creation
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain,”

falls at once into poetic declamation about the night, and indulges himself in strange images and personifications. A man about to commit a murder who invents these conceits must be a poetical villain : —

“ Now witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate’s offerings ; and wither’d murder,
Alarum’d by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl ’s his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin’s ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost.”

Can anything be more extraordinary and elaborate than this pressing of one conceit upon another? Wither’d murder has a sentinel, the wolf, who howls his watch, and who with stealthy

pace strides with Tarquin's ravishing strides like a ghost! Shakespeare makes no other character systematically talk like this.

But the fumes of the brain pass, and leave the stern, determined man of action : —

“ Whiles I threat, he lives ;
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven, or to hell.”

We have no such rant as this in Lady Macbeth. In the scenes of the murder, she does not befool herself with visions and poetry. She is practical, and her attention is given solely to the real facts about her. Contrast the simple language in which she speaks, while waiting for Macbeth, with his previous rhodomontade. Agitated, in great emotion, listening for sounds, doubting whether some mischance may not have befallen to prevent the murder, she speaks in short, broken sentences ; but she does not liken her husband to Tarquin, and say now is the time when “ witchcraft celebrates pale Hecate's offerings,” nor employ this interval in making a poem full of conceits.

Macbeth goes in to the king, and commits the murder ; no scruples of any kind prevent him. But when that is secure, he has a superstitious fit, and imagines phantom-voices, that talk as no phantoms ever did before. Still he is a coward in the presence of phantoms, and will not go back. The deed has been done, and ghosts alarm him.

But, as has been before observed, all this raving as usual passes by at once. In a half-hour he is as cold and calm as ever. The phantom-voices did not reach his conscience, and awakened no remorse. They were the children of superstition and imagination, and they vanished with cockcrow and daylight, leaving no trace behind in his memory. They have not altered his mood nor his plans.

We now come to consider Lady Macbeth's character. At all points she was her husband's opposite, or rather his complement. Where he was strong, she was weak ; where he was weak, she was strong. He was poetical and visionary of nature ; she was plain and practical. He was indirect, false, secretive ; she, on the contrary, was vehement and impulsive. Between what she willed and what she did was a straight line. She was troubled by none of his superstitious fears or visions. Her imagination was feeble and inactive, her character was energetic ; she saw only the object immediately before her, and she went to it with rapidity and directness of purpose. She was skillful in management and ready in contrivance, as women are apt to be ; while Macbeth was wanting in both these qualities, as men generally are. For herself she seems to have had no ambition, and not personally to have coveted the position of queen. Her ambition is but the reflection of Macbeth's, and her great crime was wrought in furtherance of his suggestions and promptings.

Mistaking entirely his character at first, proud of his success for his sake, and rightly reading him so far as to see that his ambition, which was insatiable, grasped at the throne, she lent herself to the murder of Duncan, in the belief that a throne once obtained, Macbeth's ambition would be satisfied. Her moral sense was inactive, and not sufficient to lead her to oppose his project. It was not, as we shall see, utterly wanting in her, as in Macbeth. She seems to have been warmly attached to Macbeth, and always, after the murder is committed, she endeavors to soothe and tranquillize him with gentle and affectionate words. But she could not understand his superstitious hesitations when once resolved on action. His poetry and his imaginative flights, as well as his visions, were to her incomprehensible, and she made the natural mistake of supposing him to be infirm of purpose. Her mind was one of management and detail. The determination and suggestion of the murder are his; the management and detail of it are hers. This is a master-stroke of Shakespeare's, by which he at once distinguishes the masculine from the feminine nature. Man is quick to propose and suggest a plan in its general scope; woman is always superior in adjusting the details by which it may be carried into execution. Lady Macbeth's nature was not wicked in itself; it was susceptible of deep feeling and remorse. But her moral sense was sluggish, while her impulses were sudden and vehement; and as such women

generally are, she was irritably impatient of the postponement of any project already decided upon. She had a strong will, and gave expression to it in an exaggerated way : —

“ I have given suck, and know
How tender ’t is to love the babe that milks me :
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck’d my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash’d the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.”

This is but a vehement, passionate, and exaggerated way of saying that if she had sworn to herself to do *anything*, however shocking, as deliberately and determinedly as Macbeth had to commit this murder, she would do it in spite of consequences, and not like him be “afraid to be the same in thine own act and valor as thou art in desire.” She does not mean, nor did Shakespeare mean, that so hideous an act would be possible for her either to plan or to commit ; but to prove her contempt of that condition of mind when “ I dare not ” waits upon “ I would,” she seizes on the most horrible and repulsive act that she can imagine, and declares energetically that, shocking as that is, she would not hesitate to do even that, had she so sworn to do it as Macbeth had. Yet this wild and violent figure of speech is generally taken as the key of her whole character. It is nothing of the sort ; for the very line preceding it proves that she had a tenderness of nature under all her energy, and a power of love as well as of will : —

“I have given suck, and know
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me.”

Well, despite that tenderness and love, which you, Macbeth, know I have, I would have done what is so contrary to all my nature, had I so sworn as you. Throughout this scene her sole object is to urge upon Macbeth, as vehemently as she can, the folly of dallying and hesitating to carry out a project which he alone had conceived, suggested, and determined, merely for fear of consequences and lest it should do him injury in the eyes of the world. He never feels nor suggests any moral objection; he does not pretend to feel it. His sole fear is lest he may not succeed; he only doubts whether it would not be better to postpone the execution of his project until a more fitting time. His decisions are less rapid than hers. She must at once act on the first strength of her resolve. She is impetuous, and would spring upon her prey at once. He, knowing that his fell purpose will only strengthen with meditation, and doubting whether the time has come to secure his object, proposes to postpone its execution. But there is no time for this. There are but a few hours in which all must be accomplished, and he is not ready with the detail. But to this proposal of postponement she says “No.” She knows that he never will rest till it is accomplished. Neither time nor place adhered when you “broke this enterprise to me,” she says; and now, when both “have made themselves,” execute your design,

and no longer let "I dare not wait upon I would." To this he feebly opposes, "If we should fail," failure being the only thing that troubles him. She then suggests the plan in detail by which the murder can be effected; and he cries out, in a burst of admiration and delight, —

"Bring forth men-children only,
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males."

Still, when the time approaches, Lady Macbeth needs all her courage, and she stimulates it with wine, lest it should break down : —

"That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold."

She preserves her courage, however, to the end, never loses her self-possession, and takes care that the plan is carried out fully in all its details. But that accomplished, she utterly breaks down. She has over-calculated her strength; she was not utterly wicked, and her remorse is terrible. From this time forward we have no such scenes between her and her husband; he performs all his other murders alone, without her connivance or knowledge.

And here the main feature of this play must be kept in mind. Lady Macbeth dies of remorse for this her crime; she cannot forget it; it haunts her in her sleep; the damned spot cannot be washed from her conscience or her hand. What a fearful cry of remorse and agony is that of hers in her dream! —

"Here 's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this *little* hand! Oh! oh! oh!"

There is no poetizing here, no sentimental and figurative personifications ; it is the cry of a wounded heart and conscience. It is written too in prose, not in verse. It is real, and not fantastic like the rant and poetry of Macbeth. That terrible night remains with her, and haunts her and tears her like a demon, and at last she dies of it.

How is it with Macbeth ? Does the memory of that night torture him ? Never for a moment. He plots new murders. He has tasted blood, and cannot live without it. On, on he goes, deeper and deeper into blood, till he is slain ; and never, to the last, one cry of conscience.

Yet it is thought that Lady Macbeth urged on this amiable man, so infirm of purpose, so filled with the milk of human kindness, and was the mainspring of his crimes. Suffice it to say, in answer to this view, that after Duncan is killed he keeps her in complete ignorance of all he does, and his murders are thenceforward more terrible and pitiless, and with no faint shadow of excuse or apology. This cold-hearted villain stops at nothing ; even her death does not awaken a throb in his heart. Is it not preposterous to suppose that the so-called fiend of the play, she who instigates and drives an unwilling victim to crime, should die of remorse for that crime ; while the amiable accomplice, far from sharing any such feeling, only plunges deeper into crime when she does not instigate him, and develops at every step an increasing brutality and savageness of nature ?

No ; it is not the tall, dark, commanding, and imperious figure of Mrs. Siddons, with threatening brow and inflated nostrils, that represents Lady Macbeth ; she is not at all of such character or features. She is of rather a delicate organization, of medium height, her hair inclining to red, her temperament nervous and sanguine, with a florid complexion and little hands. So was Lucrezia Borgia ; and so was Lady Macbeth. She was personally fair and attractive. Can any one imagine Macbeth calling a dark, towering, imperious woman like Mrs. Siddons his “dearest love,” “dear wife,” or his “dearest chuck” ?

But it is commonly thought that the murder of Duncan was suggested by Lady Macbeth, and that her husband was urged into it against his will and contrary to his nature. Such a view is utterly in contradiction of the play itself. The suggestion is entirely Macbeth’s, and he has resolved upon it before he sees her. The witches are a projection of his own desires and superstitions. They meet him at the commencement of the play, prophesying, in response to his own desires, that he is thane of Cawdor, and shall be king hereafter ; but they respond also to his fears, by adding that Banquo’s children shall be kings. Those are the very points upon which all his thoughts hinge — his ambition to be king, his fears lest the throne shall pass from his family. Hence his hate of Banquo and Fleance. From this time forward he thinks of nothing else. As he rides across the heath, he

is self-involved, abstracted, silent, sullen, revolving in his mind how to compass his designs, which are nothing less than the murder of the king. He does not dream that the prophecies of the weird women will accomplish themselves without his assistance, for they are projections of his own thoughts. He instantly receives news that he is made thane of Cawdor, and scarcely gives a thought to this honor, scarcely expresses his satisfaction ; when the news is announced he says, —

“ Glamis, and thane of Cawdor :

The greatest is behind. — ‘Thanks for your pains.’”

And then immediately his mind reverts to the promise that Banquo’s children shall be kings : —

“ Do you not hope your children shall be kings,

When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me

Promis’d no less to them ? ”

Then he falls again into gloomy silence, and talks to himself inwardly. What does he say and think ? He resolves to murder the king : —

“ This supernatural soliciting

Cannot be ill ; cannot be good. If ill,

Why hath it given me earnest of success,

Commencing in a truth ? I ’m thane of Cawdor.

If good, why do I yield to that suggestion

Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,

And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,

Against the use of nature ? Present fears

Are less than horrible imaginings ;

My thought, whose *murder* yet is but fantastical,

Shakes so my single state of man, that function

Is smother’d in surmise ; and nothing is

But what is not.”

Yes, already he dreams of murder. He sees not his way clear; he will trust to chance; but he dreams of murder. And full of these thoughts, he rushes to his wife to fill her mind with his project, to consult her as to how it can be carried into execution; for he cannot plan in detail; and though the thought crosses him, that

“If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir,”

yet this is but a hope; for in the next scene he has determined to take the matter into his own hands and trust nothing to chance. As soon as he hears that Malcolm is made Prince of Cumberland and heir to the throne, he determines absolutely to kill the king: —

“The Prince of Cumberland! — That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o’erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires;
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.”

He has already written to Lady Macbeth; and his letter has but one thought and one theme, — the promise that he shall be king. Much as she fears his nature, she knows thoroughly his desires, and has faint glimpses of his real character; she knows that he *means* to be king, and sees that he would “wrongly win;” that his ambition is great, and that his mind is filled solely with one idea. But she fears that he is “too full of the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way;” and when

she hears that Duncan is coming to the castle, and that Macbeth is hurrying to see her before the king's arrival, she doubts his plan no longer. For a moment she is aghast. "Thou'rt mad to say it," she says to the messenger who announces the king's approach; for she sees that he comes to his death: —

"The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements."

He has been lured here^e by Macbeth to compass his destruction; and in a moment Macbeth will be with her. Then, summoning up all her courage at once, she resolves to aid him in his ambitious and murderous design. She calls upon the "spirits that tend on mortal thoughts" to unsex her, to alter her nature, to make her cruel and remorseless, to let nothing intervene to shake her purpose; for she is not quite sure of herself. She knows what "compunctious visitings of nature" are, and she strengthens herself against them. She is not naturally cruel; and she cries out to the spirits to "stop up the access and passage to remorse" now open in her nature, to change her "milk for gall," and to cover her with "the dunest smoke of hell," so that her

"keen knife *see* not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, Hold, hold."

In this tremendous apostrophe, in which she goads herself on to crime, the woman's nature is plainly

seen. Macbeth never prays to have his nature altered, to have any passages to remorse closed up; never fears "compunctious visitings of nature," nor desires darkness to hide his knife, so that he may not *see* the wound he makes. But she knows she is a woman, and that she needs to be unsexed, and feels that she is doing violence to her own nature; still her will is strong, and she cries down her misgivings, and resolves to aid Macbeth in his design.

Macbeth meets her in this mood. There is no salutation or greeting on his part; he has but one idea, — Duncan is coming, and is to be murdered. His first words are, —

"My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night."

Whereupon she asks, "And when goes hence?" "To-morrow," he answers, and pauses; and adds, "as he purposes." But in the look and in the pause Lady Macbeth has read his whole soul and intent. There is murder in that look; and she cries: —

"O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book, where men
May read strange matters."

There is no explanation between them. He has conveyed all his intention by a look and a gesture, as she herself distinctly says. He has ridden headlong, as fast as horse could carry him, away from the king, full of this one idea; and the king

has vainly "coursed him at the heels," having the purpose, as he himself says, "to be his purveyor." And his thoughts have spoken in his looks so unmistakably, that they are perfectly understood. If there be any doubt by whom the murder was suggested, it is made perfectly clear by what Lady Macbeth subsequently says to him in the next scene in which they are presented. When he begins to doubt whether the murder had not better be postponed, she says : —

"What beast was 't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me ?

It was not of my plotting, but of your own ; "Nor time, nor place, did then adhere, and yet you would make both ;" you desired it and still desire it, but are afraid of consequences. These words of hers would indeed seem to indicate that he had urged the crime upon her against her will at a previous interview not reported in the play, or perhaps by a letter ; for she says distinctly, that when he broke the enterprise to her, —

"Nor *time*, nor *place*,
Did then adhere, and yet *you would make both* :
They have made themselves."

It would plainly seem, therefore, that Macbeth had broken this enterprise to her, and urged it on her, even before the king had determined to come to his castle, and that he intended to make time and place. This would account completely for her opening speech, and for the fact that he does

not make any explanation to her of his intentions other than by his look and intonation when they first meet ; for certainly there is nothing in the play about the time and place of the murder except as herein indicated. It would also explain the surprise of Lady Macbeth when she hears that her husband is coming, and the king after him : “Thou’rt mad to say it,” she says ; and “the raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements.” The time and place had made themselves, then ; and it is on hearing this that she suddenly changes from calm to vehement emotion, and makes that wonderful apostrophe to the spirits to unsex her. She sees that all has been resolved, and that she has need of her utmost resolution.

There is no warrant of any kind that, in the simple words, “And when goes hence,” she meant more than she said. It was the most natural question that she could possibly ask. Granting that she intended equally with him to commit the murder, what is more natural than that she should wish to know how long the king was to stay, so as to know how soon it was necessary to carry out the plan of murder, and what time there was in which to make all the arrangements ? Not only Macbeth pauses after saying “To-morrow” (so, at least, is the punctuation in all editions), before adding “as he purposes,” but Lady Macbeth, in her answer, says that she sees in his face that he intends that “never shall sun that morrow see.”

Yet, in the recitation of these parts on the stage, and as generally read, the meaning is given to Lady Macbeth's simple words; and Macbeth is made perfectly innocently to answer without showing in his look any "strange matter." But the king is coming close on his heels; there is no time to arrange details; and Macbeth goes away to receive him, saying, "We will speak further."

The characters, as exhibited in the next scenes, have been already sufficiently discussed. He shows his superstitions, his visions, his poetry, and his hesitations; she, with the stern determination of a woman who has screwed her courage to the sticking-place, is agitated by no visions, but, feeling the necessity of immediate action, she occupies herself in the arrangements of details, and thus dulls her conscience.

After all the excitements which have agitated Macbeth — after his soliloquy, in which he says there is no spur to prick the sides of his intent, but only vaulting ambition; but if he were sure of success, he would jump the life to come — there comes a moment when he either has or pretends to have a hesitation about proceeding further in "this business." He does not hesitate for conscience' sake, but because, being ambitious, he now would like to wear the golden opinions he has won, "in their newest gloss," and not cast them aside so soon, before he has had the satisfaction of being wondered at and admired a little longer. He had gained praise and high position, and his

vanity was gratified. He naturally would pause before committing a hideous murder. But he never pretends that this feeling comes from any moral sense. His mind has been too long strained with one thought; and, as in all men of excitable brain, there comes a moment of reaction. He cannot see his way clear. He fears the effect of his crime. He does not see how it can be done so that he may avoid suspicion, and attain the object beyond the murder and for which he commits it, without running too great risks, and thus exposing himself to the vengeance of the king's friends. He fears that his "bloody instructions" may "return to plague the inventor" — not hereafter, but "*here.*" But what most troubles him is, that he cannot see the practical way, cannot arrange the details so as to secure a chance of avoiding suspicion. Here his wife comes to his aid. She has thought out a plan and arranged the details. She sternly opposes his proposal to abandon his design, for she knows that his hesitation is only for a moment, and that nothing less than to be king can ever satisfy him. Better, then, do the deed at once. His only opposition after this is, "If we should fail?" But as soon as he sees the feasibility of her plan, all his scruples are gone; he is more than convinced, he is delighted, and enters upon it with a joy which he does not pretend to conceal.

During all these scenes, up to the murder of Duncan, Lady Macbeth is laboring under an excitement of mind which sustains her in carrying

out the design of her husband. The time is purposely made very short — only a few hours between the arrival of Duncan and his death — so that she may not break down. All is hurry and movement, and arrangement of detail. There is no time for reaction. The very necessity for immediate action serves as an irritant to the nerves, and strains all her thoughts and feelings to an unnatural pitch. Still, when the murder is on the point of being done, she keeps up her courage by drink; for the strain is almost too great. In this excited state her inflamed will has got completely the command of her; and to have it all over, and not caring about the dreadful design longer, she says that had Duncan “not resembled my father as he slept, I had done it.” But though she can talk of dashing out the brains of her babe while it was smiling in her face, she was not, even in this excitement, able to strike Duncan, because she thought he looked like her father. Her woman’s hand would have failed her had she attempted it. But all her powers are bound up in this one design. She has come to a violent determination, and this she will carry out, come what may. She thrusts aside all compunction of conscience, and makes such a noise by action in her brain, that its still small voice cannot be heard.

Macbeth, on the contrary, is of a colder and more brutal nature. His determination is sullen, and it lies like an immovable rock on which the flames of his imagination burn like momentary

fires of straw, and over which his superstitious visions pass like clouds or fogs, and then clear away, leaving the rock unchanged. Just before he commits the murder, Banquo comes in and tells him that the king

“hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess ; and shut up
In measureless content.”

But this does not touch Macbeth, nor induce a moment's hesitation. Banquo then speaks of the three weird sisters, and says, “To you they have show'd some truth ;” and Macbeth answers falsely : —

“I think not of them ;
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We 'd spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.”

Thus, cold and collected, he bids him “Good repose,” sends off the servant, and waits for the bell to ring, which is the sign that all is ready for him to murder Duncan. In this interval we have his three characteristic features brought out one after the other : the cloudy vision of the air-drawn dagger ; then the straw-fire of his poetry about Hecate and withered murder's sentinel, the wolf, and Tarquin's ravishing strides ; and, as these clear off, the stern, sullen resolution underneath — “Whiles I threat he lives ;” “I go, and it is done.”

When the murder is done, the two are equally

distinct in character, — she energetic and practical, he visionary and superstitious ; and so they part.

Thus far, be it observed, Lady Macbeth has supposed her husband to be merely “infirm of purpose ;” but the next scene is to open her eyes to a glimpse of his real character.

Macbeth has become perfectly calm and cold again in a few minutes, and makes his appearance immediately after the knocking. He is completely master of himself, offers to conduct Macduff to the king, and when Macduff says he knows it will be a “joyful trouble” to him, answers like a proverb, calmly, “The labor we delight in physics pain.” The king is then found dead, and the noise brings Lady Macbeth from her room. What a difference is now visible in the way in which she and he speak and act ! When Macduff says, “Our royal master’s murdered !” she cries out, “Woe ! alas ! what, in our house ?” and says not a word more. Macbeth, however, who is only afraid of shadows, but who, with the daylight, has no fear of looking at dead bodies, or adding one or two more with his sword, goes to the room of Duncan, and then reappears, without the faintest shadow of feeling, and makes a little hypocritical poem on the event : —

“ Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had liv’d a blessed time ; for, from this instant,
There’s nothing serious in mortality :
All is but toys : renown and grace is dead ;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.”

“What is amiss?” says Donalbain. And Macbeth cries, “You are, and do not know ’t. The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood is stopp’d; the very source of it is stopp’d.”

This is Macbeth's rant and fustian. He has no feeling, and, as usual, he makes the pretense of poetry serve him. The head, the spring, the fountain, the source is stopped, is stopped.

And this stuff he recites coolly, although he has but a moment before wantonly killed the two grooms; nay, he does not mention it until afterwards, on their being spoken of by Lenox, when this hypocritical villain cries : —

“O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

Macd.

Wherefore did you so ?

Macb. Who can be wise, amaz'd, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. — Here lay Duncan,
His *silver* skin lac'd with his *golden* blood;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature,
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore: who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make 's love known?"

During this amazing speech, in which he poetizes so elaborately, and with such curious artifice coldly paints the picture of the man and friend he had just murdered, Lady Macbeth has been looking and listening in silence. Suddenly, for the first time, she sees what her husband really is ; she

sees that he has neither heart nor conscience ; for no man possessing either could have acted or talked as he has since the murder of Duncan. So far from having any feeling of shame or remorse, he, without provocation, wantonly, and with no sufficient object, has added two other murders to it ; and, with a cold-blooded artificial hypocrisy, he paints in his stilted way the scene of Duncan's death, and has command enough of himself to seek out elaborate and high-flown phrases. But Lady Macbeth, whose courage, stimulated by excitement, has carried her through the murder, now suddenly breaks down. This new revelation of her husband's character, and the ghastly picture which he summons up before her of the scene of the murder, are too much for her. She swoons, loses all consciousness, and is carried out. In her violent excitement, while there was something practical to busy her mind and her body with, she could carry back the daggers and smear the grooms with blood ; but she could not bear the vivid remembrance of it when there was nothing to do, and when the excitement was over : as women will go through extreme dangers, stand at the surgeon's table during terrible operations, be great and strong in a great crisis, and then suddenly faint and fall when the work is over, unable to bear the remembrance of what they have gone through.

This swooning of Lady Macbeth is the crisis of her nature. From this time forward she is no more what she has appeared ; we hear no more

urging of Macbeth to strengthen his throne by other crimes; no more taunts by her that he is infirm of purpose; no more allusions to his amiable weaknesses of character. She has begun to know him and to fear him. She only endeavors to tranquilize him and content him with what he has got. But still she does not know him; for his nature, before hidden, like secret writing, comes out little by little before the fire of his heated ambition and superstitious fears.

At this swooning-point the two characters of Lady Macbeth and her husband cross each other. She has thus far only made the running for Macbeth, and he now takes up the race and passes her; she not only does not follow, but withdraws. Henceforth he rushes to his goal alone; alone he arranges the death of Banquo and Fleance.

When next they meet she is no longer the same person we have known; she feels the gnawing tooth of remorse; she is calmed and cowed by what she has done: —

“Nought ’s had, all ’s spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
’T is safer to be that which we destroy,
Than, by destruction, dwell in doubtful joy.”

And as Macbeth enters she endeavors to tranquilize his mind. She has his confidence no longer; he avoids her, and keeps alone after the murder of the king. She, not yet aware of the abysses of his nature, and little imagining that he has been plotting the murder of Banquo, supposes that the

secret of his perturbations, of the solitude he now seeks, and of his avoidance of her, is the remorse that he begins to feel, and says as he enters : —

“How now, my lord ! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on ? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard : what ’s done is done.”

His answer shows it is no remorse which is haunting him ; his sorry fancies are new plots of murder :

“We have scotch’d the snake, not kill’d it ; ”
and we are still “in danger of her former tooth.”

“But let
The frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in *fear*, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly : better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our place, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave ;
After life’s fitful fever, he sleeps well ;
Treason has done his worst : nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further ! ”

Here is one of those cases where he uses his poetry as a cloak to his real thoughts. Yet despite his hypocrisy, which takes in his wife, his real meaning is clear. He would rather die than to go on in this fear : rather be like Duncan, whom they have at all events “sent to peace,” and whom nothing can “touch further,” than on “the torture of the mind to lie in restless ecstasy.” What is this “fear” ? what is this “torture of the mind” ?

Is it, as Lady Macbeth supposes, from remorse? Oh, no! he tells us himself what it is; it is solely because Banquo and Fleance are alive: —

“O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know’st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.”

This it is that tortures him, and this only.

“But in them nature’s copy’s not eterne,”

says she; meaning, as she has throughout this scene, solely to console him and draw his thoughts away. They may die; a thousand accidents may happen to them; you may outlive them; don’t torture yourself with vain fears. “*There’s comfort yet,*” he cries, “they are assailable;” and now, after his old fashion, he breaks into poetry:

“Then be thou *jocund*: ere the bat hath flown
His cloister’d flight; ere, to black Hecate’s summons,
The shard-borne beetle, with his drowsy hums,
Hath rung night’s yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.”

“What’s to be done?” she cries; for having completely misunderstood him through all the previous part of this interview, she completely fails to see what he now means. But he has no longer confidence in her; and so, with caressing words, and probably with some caressing act, he answers her:

“Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed.”

How could she suspect his real meaning? This murdering hypocrite had just told her that Banquo was coming to the feast that night, and bade her be jovial, and said to her, —

“Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue.”

And this he proposes to her after having just left the murderers whom he has hired to waylay and kill Banquo, and entertaining no real doubt in his mind that Banquo will never reach the supper — certainly never reach it unless his plot miscarries. Well might she “marvel at his words.” What follows is full of poetry and wickedness; but it is plain that he was a mystery to her now, a riddle which she could not read.

The banquet-scene now comes, and Macbeth, believing that he has secured the death of Banquo and Fleance, is happy, until the murderers come in and tell him that Fleance has escaped. This upsets him : —

“Then comes *my fit* again: I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air:
Now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.”

So he poetizes his condition, for superstitious fears always inflame his imagination; but he cannot regain his composure; his “fit” is on him, as it “hath been from his youth.” He conjures up the phantom of Banquo to threaten him and his throne, and this ghost shakes him with superstitious terror. Lady Macbeth, to whom it is invisible, rouses herself at this; and not only not comprehending these starts and flaws of fear, but having a contempt for him, endeavors to recall him to himself by sharp

words ; but it is useless, his fit will not leave him, and the company is dismissed in confusion. When the guests have gone, Lady Macbeth's spirit and courage, which were momentary, have fled. She does not taunt him, but soothes him. He, as soon as he recovers himself, begins with Macduff, whom he also means to murder : —

“ Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,
Which must be acted, ere they may be scann'd.”

To this she only says, not imagining his meaning,

“ You lack the season of all natures, sleep.”

Henceforward Lady Macbeth disappears ; we hear nothing of her save in the terrible sleep-walking scene ; she is dying of remorse. But Macbeth goes to the weird sisters, to learn whether “ Banquo's issue shall ever reign in this kingdom.” They answer, “ Seek to know no more : ” and he cries out, “ I *will* be satisfied ; deny me this, and an eternal curse fall on you.” And when they show him the issue of Banquo, kings, he is enraged beyond control, and curses them. Henceforth for him no hesitations, no delays. He speaks directly enough now.

“ From this moment

The firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done :
The castle of Macduff I will surprise ;
Seize upon Fife ; give to the edge o' th' sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool ;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool :
But no more *sights* ! ”

And no more *sights* he has ; but he is still haunted by fears. And when "the English power is near, led on by Malcolm, his uncle Siward, and the good Macduff," burning for revenge, Macbeth's spirit falters. He rushes into violent rages and then subsides into vague fears, and then endeavors to strengthen his heart by recalling the mysterious promises of the weird sisters that he shall not fall by the hand of any man of woman born, or before Birnam wood come to Dunsinane ; but, do all he can, "he cannot buckle his distempered cause within the belt of rule," though he declares, —

"The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt, nor shake with fear."

Still he does fear ; and in one of his dispirited moods, after blazing out at the messenger who tells him of the approach of Birnam wood, —

"The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon !
Where got'st thou that goose look ? "

he says, finding that there are ten thousand men coming to attack him, and his followers are not stanch, —

"This push
Will chair me ever, or disseat me now.
I have liv'd long enough : my way of life
Is fall'n into the serf, the yellow leaf :
And that which should accompany old age,
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have ; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-honor, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny."

But in a moment he is himself again, and cries : —

"I'll fight till from my bones the flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armor."

In this mood the illness and death of the queen is nothing to him; he fights bravely to the end; though, superstitious to the last, his “better part of man” is cowed by the knowledge that Macduff “was from his mother’s womb untimely ripped,” and so not of woman born.

And so, by the sword of Macduff, perishes the worst villain, save Iago, that Shakespeare ever drew.

We have called the witches the projections of Macbeth’s evil thoughts, and suggested that they were only objective representations of his inward being. To this it may be objected that they were seen also by Banquo. But this may well be; for Banquo also seems to have had evil intentions, which are vaguely hinted at in the play. He constantly harps on the idea that his children are to be kings. Approaching the castle of Inverness at night, before the murder of the king, he says, —

“Hold, take my sword. . . .
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers!
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose! — Give me my sword.”

Meeting then Macbeth, he gives him the diamond sent by the king to Lady Macbeth; and after speaking of Duncan’s “measureless content,” he says, —

“I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show’d some truth.”

At which Macbeth proposes an interview, to

“Spend it in some words upon *that* business.”

To which he readily consents.

The “cursed thoughts,” then, are connected with his dreams about the weird sisters.

At his next appearance the same thoughts agitate him in Macbeth’s palace at Fores. His first words are — in soliloquy —

“Thou hast it now, king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promis’d ; and, I fear,
Thou play’dst most foully for ’t : yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them
(As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine),
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope ? But, hush ! no more.”

When it is recollected that, after the scene on the heath with the soldiers, these are nearly all the words we have from Banquo, it seems to be pretty clearly indicated that his thoughts at least were not perfectly honest and what they should have been.

The weird sisters are but outward personifications of the evil thoughts conceived and fermenting in the brains of Banquo and Macbeth ; both high in station, both generals in the king’s army, both friends, and both nourishing evil wishes. They are visible only to these two friends ; and though they are represented as having an outer existence independent of them, they are, metaphysically speaking, but embodiments of the hidden

thoughts and desires of Banquo and Macbeth ; as such they are a new and terrible creation, differing from the vulgar flesh-and-blood witches of Middleton. They look not like the inhabitants of the earth ; they vanish into thin air ; wild, vague, mysterious, they come and go, like devilish thoughts that tempt us, and take shape before us, as if they had come from the other world. The devils that haunt us and tempt us come out of ourselves, like the weird sisters of Macbeth.

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